



02913
THE DEADLY
HANDS OF
KUNG FU

APR. No 11

75¢



NO MAN CAN STAND AGAINST...

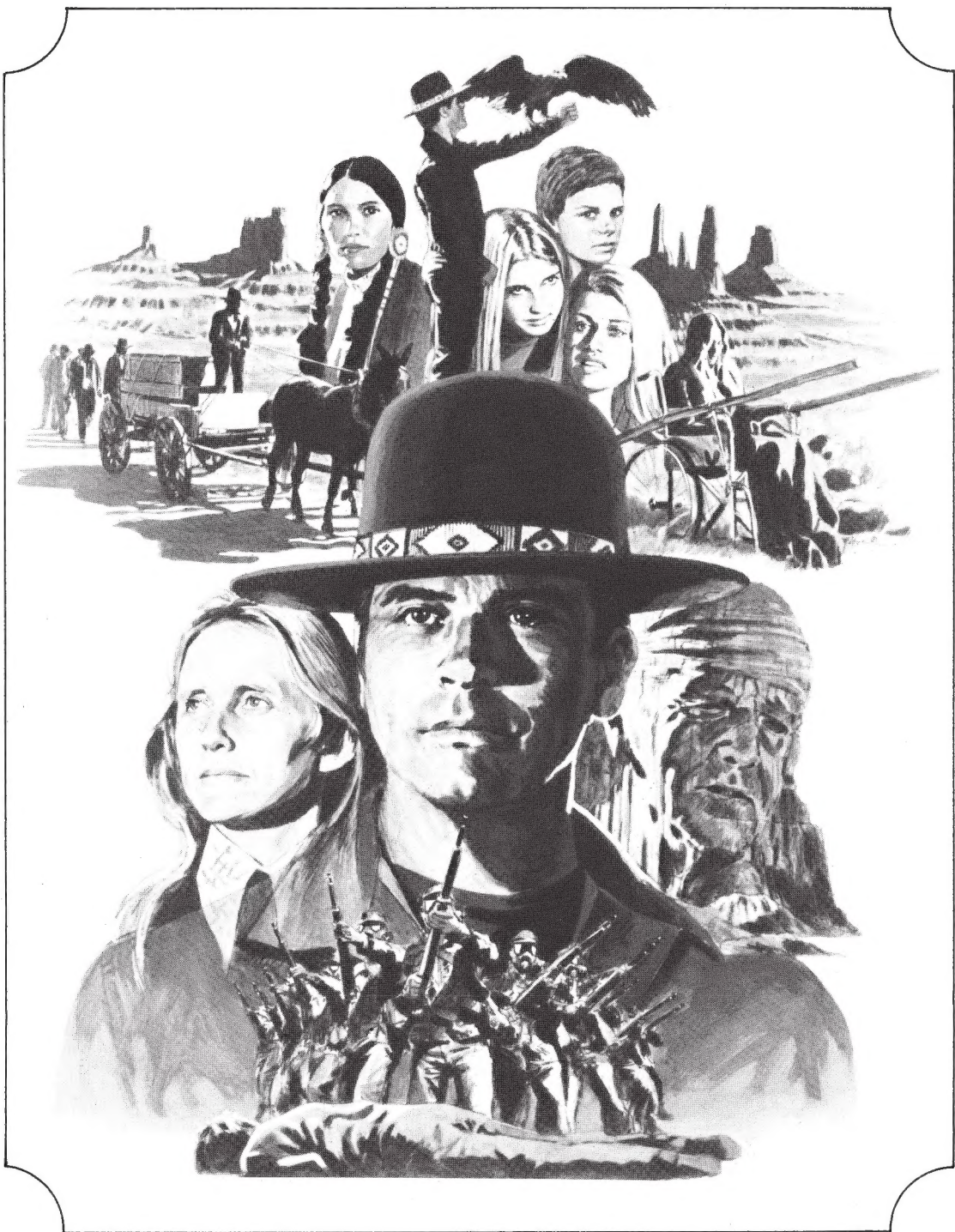
THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FUTM

**SPECIAL!
BILLY JACK!**



MARVEL

MARTIAL ARTS MAYHEM OR "MORAL" VIOLENCE?



The Trial of Billy Jack

Volume 1, Number 11

STAN LEE presents
THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU™

MARV WOLFGAN
Editor-in-Chief

DON MCGREGOR
Editor

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Associate Editor

JOHN WARNER
Assistant Editor

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NORA MACLIN**
Design

LEN GROW
Production

TOM MONTEMORANO
Circulation

ROY THOMAS
Editor Emeritus

**MASTER OF KUNG FU:
"A DIFFERENT LESSON IN BLOOD
UNCHANGED!"**

*by Doug Moench, Mike Vosburg &
Jack Abel*

Violence blackens the future; the past
becomes a blood-red vision! Shang-Chi
faces both, amidst an angry present!

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One author's reactions to a philosophy—and a phenomenon! Billy Jack!

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by Don McGregor
The trial of *The Trial of Billy Jack!*

**SONS OF THE TIGER:
"GLADIATORS IN THE CRYPT OF
TOMORROW!"**

*by Bill Mantlo, George Perez &
Tony DeZuniga*

Fear-fraught fantasy merges with grim
reality in the most bizarre martial arts
masterpiece of all!

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Since we only had a single page last issue for your comments on DEADLY HANDS, we're going to start off with some feedback on #8, and then proceed to letters on #9. Oh, and before we forget, the new logo for "Enter the Letters," which appears for the very first time right here before your very eyes, is the work of George (Pacesetter) Perez and Mighty Mike Esposito. Take an honorable bow, gentlemen. And now, lest ye vast legions Out There grow impatient—

Dear Don and Dave,
DEADLY HANDS #8 was a magazine that left me with mixed emotions. To begin with, the cover was undoubtedly the worst in this magazine's history, and possibly the poorest ever on a Marvel black-and-white.

The "Readers Forum" section was a bit depressing to read, but more so, it was mystifying in true Oriental tradition. Charles Haskell, echoing my own sentiments, asked if it would be possible for you to give the Avengers' Mantis her own series here. It was your response to this query that was truly brow-furrowing in nature.

To quote, "... many of our readers have sworn that they will never buy a single Marvel magazine again if we devote so much as one comic page to the adventures of Mantis!" I'm at an honest loss to understand this, since I've noticed no "hate campaign" being waged against her in the letters column of THE AVENGERS mag; further, as you probably know, in FOOM MAGAZINE #7 Mantis garnered fourth spot in the "Most requested for new series" area, preceded only by such long-time favorite blockbusters as the Silver Surfer, the Vision, and the X-Men.

The only explanation I can offer is that those who protested against her inclusion here are not familiar with either her or Marvel Comics in general, and thus assume a female martial artist must be patterned after many of the ridiculous heroines rampant in the Kung Fu cinema.

"A Hatred for All Seasons," by Doug Moench and Mike Vosburg was definitely one of the weakest stories featuring the son of Fu Manchu I've yet read. The character of the Midnight Slasher was, to say the least, stereotyped and hackneyed and his death at the end was way too predictable. Doug, please make this last villain who can't be hurt by Kung Fu, because such people—insane or not—just don't exist. It is highly possible that a man who is high on some drug, or who is dangerously insane, will be more immune to punches and blows than would a normal human being; but there is no living person who can take repeated kicks to the face delivered by a true master of the martial arts and remain conscious, I don't care who he is.

Mike Vosburg continues to disappoint me on the artistic front, and I'm sure he's not putting forth his best

efforts on the strip. Shang-Chi's Kung Fu moves have never looked more soggy and generated less impact for the reader. I believe this series featuring Shang-Chi needs the kind of face lift recently given to the Sons of the Tiger.

One thing I must compliment you all on is the aforementioned Sons of the Tiger. A few issues back, I was pleading for their replacement but that has all changed now. Bill Mantlo has indeed begun to flesh out each of the Tigers, giving them distinct personality traits and I also like this idea of having one of them battle individually, without the other two, from time to time.

Very nice, Mr. Mantlo, you've taken a sure loser and made it my favorite feature in the book. And no small bit of praise should be extended toward newcomer George Perez, who has done wonders with the artwork. This issue had his finest pencilling yet, and I predict he's going to turn into one of the best action-oriented artists of the 1970's. I see George's style as a combination of several others, though with his own unique quality. He has the cinematic-panel progression of Rich Buckler, along with the physiological renderings of John Buscema, and he throws in a bit of the indefinable Kirby-explosiveness, too. Keep up the fine work here and in the color MAN-WOLF strip.

"Swords for Hire," by J. David Warner, was a well written article, although I felt it was far too long. I'm getting a bit tired of reviews of Kung Fu or "chi-sword" movies, because most of them are quite plotless with poor characterizations, and so reading a review in which the writer tells us how exciting the action was, is just not worthy of much space.

Dave Kraft did a decent job giving the readers an overview of Kung Fu in the literary medium, and although I haven't as yet read any of the books mentioned, I now know which to buy and which to avoid. In the future, maybe Dave can go into greater detail, as he did several issues ago, about one of the more quality series. I wonder how well these martial arts paperbacks are selling?

I was happy to see Frank McLaughlin's comparative study of Kung Fu and karate come in so highly in the "Readers' Poll" this time. I hope you have other such studies prepared for us in the future, because I would

like to see this become a standard feature here. And again, I think some articles on the real martial artists like Chuck Norris, perhaps an interview or two, which I've enjoyed greatly in other Marvel black-and-whites, would prove extremely popular.

Let's see some articles on Bruce Lee's jeet kune do, and his views on the classical approach to Kung Fu.

I've just written myself silly, so if anyone's still awake, I'll see you next issue.

Ralph Macchio
188 Wilson Drive
Cresskill, NJ 07626

Folks, if you think Ralph's letter is wrong, you should've seen it before more than HALF of it was deleted for space purposes! These are the kinda letters we love to receive, but very rarely have the room to print. Thanks, Ralph!

Anyway, as you've seen by now, we've begun experimenting with the idea of interviews (the David Brownridge piece in #9), while in response to your other suggestion, we do indeed have an article on Bruce Lee's JEET KUNE DO, just waiting for the earliest possible opportunity to be included in these pages.

How's that for being on the ("ahem") chopstick, Ralph? And this seems like as good a place as any to apologize to Frank McLaughlin for the inadvertent juxtaposition of the captions for his illustrations in the article on basic sparring in #9. The last two captions on page 25 should be switched with the first two on page 26.

We're not sure who to blame for this mistake, but we think Fu Manchu had a hand in it. Sorry, Frank!



Dear Marvel,

Have you seen the new magazine BRUCE LEE, KING OF KUNG FU? It was released by the New English Library, and is a tribute to millions of Kung Fu fans' greatest star and idol.

There is a section in the back called "Martial Arts Medley," which deals with the leading movies and magazines in the field. Can you imagine my surprise when I saw DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU, right at the top!

This must surely prove that this is indeed the Second Golden Age of Marvel Magazines and comics!

Lance Johnson
25 Brentwood Avenue
Figtree, N.S.W.
2525 Australia

Dear Don and company:

It's an odd thing, to say about a strip as new as Master of Kung Fu, but Shang-Chi is getting into a rut.

He is overexposed and is going nowhere. His conflict with his father is integral to the series, I think and should not be resolved; that would be pointless. Rather, it should be shoved into the background. Allow Shang to linger in a city or town for a few issues, and develop a supporting cast, or at least a few non-cardboard characters.

While, Doug Moench's scripts are tolerable but uninspired, Mike Vosburg's art is inspired but not quite tolerable.

In fact my best prescription would be the cutting-back of Shāng-Chi to six or eight appearances a year, and replacing him with non-series stories, or the Englehart/Brunner FU MANCHU strip, or another new series. This move would, of course, push the Sons of the Tiger into the limelight, but I suspect that wouldn't be such a bad idea.

Apparently, Bill Mantlo has a good feel for the strip, and intends to do it on the deeper, larger, more mind-boggling scale it has always needed. Also, George Perez—one of a long line of your fine artistic finds—knows what he's doing and brings the Tiger Sons a strong, tense style. The strip, with more of this development, could be a strong selling point. One thing that the Sons do need, though, is another five pages.

Why not reverse the page-proportion? And let's see more McLaughlin, whether writing/illustrating his own instruction-texts or illustrating others' articles; he's just too fine. And more "Under the Pagoda," exploring the Chinese-American community and martial arts in literature and cinema; John Warner is fine there, at his personal best.

This is a book of precarious popularity and, hopefully, good guidance will help it outlive the crest of the martial arts wave.

Roger Klose
2739 East 65th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11234

As we've mentioned elsewhere, Roger, the inestimable Mr. Moench has intentions of doing precisely what you suggest in your second paragraph. That is, to gradually shift Shang-Chi's conflict with his father into the background, so as to allow for a much wider and more varied sequence of events in the Master of Kung Fu series.

Further, as you noted last issue, Iron Fist usurped Shang-Chi—an occurrence that will become more and more commonplace in the months to come. Again, we wish to please, though—of course—there will continue to be occasional adventures of the Son of Fu Manchu in these parched pages.

Satisfied?



Dear Don, Marv and David,

Here are my compliments, complaints and suggestions concerning your DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG-FU mag:

Keep the Sons of the Tiger strip, but don't make it so corny as you have in the past. Catching shurikens, dodging the fire of a sub-machine gun, taking on about twenty ninjas and coming out without a scratch, etc.

Get rid of Shang-Chi for a couple issues, and stop killing off his friends. During the time Shang-Chi's been around, you've killed off the following people just when he's become friends with them: The Midnight Slasher, Genie, Sandy, Mr. Man, Gregor and Co., Kwai Loo, and others.

Let's see some more non-series comics like you did in issue #5 with "The Casket of Hsien Hang" or maybe cut out Shang-Chi and put in a new series (I don't think many people would miss him since he is in TWO of his own color comics.)

Keep the art team of Perez and Milgrom on the Tigers.

Kevin Patterson
2215 N. Hammond Lake Drive
W. Bloomfield, MI 48033

This is our month to please; as you noted from our answer to the previous letter, Kevin, we'll be experimenting with the idea of alternating Shang-Chi with other features. And what's more, simply by flipping through this issue, you'll note the concentration of the entire articles section on THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK, while (hold your breath!) next month we'll be similarly covering THE MAN WITH THE GOLDEN GUN!!

Ask, and ye shall receive. So be it!

My Dear Letter People:

As much as I wish I could, I honestly CANNOT tell which panels George Perez added to Shang-Chi's exploits in issue #9 of DEADLY HANDS.

Please let the truth be known.

Michael Higgins
423 76th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11209

P.S. Try to have George do more work for your color

books, where I feel it looks best. I have dreams that in the future he may even do the AVENGERS. Wouldn't that be nice?

According to Dauntless Don McGregor—possibly the only man who truly knows for sure, besides the artists involved—the panels in "A Contest of Truth!" by George Perez are: Page 14, panel 4; page 15, panels 3 & 4; page 17, panels 5 & 6; and page 19, center section.

Now, in response to your request for more of Pacesetter Perez in the color comics—you're in luck! Look for an upcoming GIANT-SIZE FANTASTIC FOUR to be pencilled by George . . . and, in addition, he'll be taking over LUKE CAGE, POWERMAN along with the aforementioned Dauntless One in the very near future, so be on the look out!

(Oh yeah, Dave Kraft says not to forget to mention the MAN-WOLF, on which he and Mr. Perez team up every two months!)



READERS' FORUM

By dint of dagger and darksome dirk, we are honored to be able to present this popular parsimonious poll of rollicking reader's raves, and if that ain't enough alliteration to enlighten, then say it aloud a dozen times, fast!

- 1) "A STORM OF VENGEANCE!" by BILL MANTLO, GEORGE PEREZ & AL MILGROM, marks a return to greatness for everybody's favorite Tiger Sons.
- 2) "A HATRED FOR ALL SEASONS!" by DOUG MOENCH, MIKE VOSBURG & JACK ABEL, relegates roisterous renegade son Shang-Chi to the number two spot . . . at least, for THIS issue.
- 3) Wouldn't ya know it? "KUNG FU IN THE PAPERBACKS!" by DAVID ANTHONY KRAFT tied with "SWORDS FOR HIRE!" by JOHN DAVID WARNER—which is a good thing, too, since these two editorial stalwarts share the same office.
- 4) UNDER THE PAGODA: "FANTASY, FOLKLORE AND THINGS!" by JOHN WARNER, an inside-cover delight.

Okay, you called the shots once—let's see you do it again. How will the creative conglomerate who collaborated on this colossal collection of pages fare against one another? Vote, will yez?

DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU
Marvel Magazine Group
575 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

A DIFFERENT EDITORIAL, IN BLOOD UNCHANGED!

Although this is an editorial for DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU #11, many of these words will have little to do with the actual content of this particular issue.

Some will ask, "So what's different about that?"

To which we reply, "See, the above title told you nothing has changed."

But some things **have** changed.

This is an obituary notice which Marv Wolfman, in his infinite wisdom, asked me to write. "Say something nice about your departure as editor, and also mention something nice about the man who will be taking over those editorial reins, Archie Goodwin. But make it short, and say something nice about this current issue of DEADLY HANDS, too, which just happens to be your swan song."

Okay, Marv: "Nice."

Now that that's out of the way, and many of you are asking, "What in the hell is he babbling about?", I'll do my best to explain.

It occurred to me the other day, while hiding under a desk to escape the interrogation that would be mine if Jumbo John Verpoorten found me, that this was no way for a grown man to act. Jumbo John had his reasons to be wrath: The latest issue of THE BLACK PANTHER was late, as usual, and he wanted to know where the rest of the book was. There was no way I could answer that question honestly. It was still locked somewhere inside my head. At home, artwork waited upon my desk to have words added to the illustrations.

The words don't come easy, friend.

Especially when you've spent the past day trying to meet the deadline for a book like DEADLY HANDS or any one of our other books. And when you've met that one, there's another waiting.

Endlessly.

The Black Panther is like a great cat crouching next to Killraven. The day ends and the nights begin. Weekends blur. Someone advises, "You've got a deadline to meet, knock the book out. Look, man, the letterers will love you if you cut down the copy, the production staff will love you if you keep it under twenty five words or less. And, man, don't you want to be loved?"

Well, yes, but not at **that** cost, I guess.

So here I am, writing an obituary notice that isn't short—but at least no one has to letter it.

So let's build it up right. **This is the senses-shattering editorial we thought we'd never have to write** (notice how easily us editorial types can shift into the omnipresent first person plural!); **the editorial of the century unleashed at last! Can any man survive its deadly wrath?**

Another voice once advised me, "Nobody ever **really** reads the editorials."

Which leads me to ask myself why, then, am I knocking myself out over this thing late at night? I stare at the night sky and search for stars while the electric typewriter hums a dirge that tells me I've lost the words. . . if I ever had them.

And there are very few stars visible from the New York City boroughs.

The decision finally had to be made. I knew I couldn't avoid it any longer. And writing has always been my great love—a compulsive love, admittedly. So here it is. A swan song written to a deadline, as late as nearly everything else. Lateness is my refrain.

And besides, I like Jumbo John and wish I wasn't on his bad list all the time. I might still be on his bad list in the days to come, but at least I won't be so easily waylaid.

To you, John, I apologize.

I think we've come somewhere with these magazines in the past half year, and doubtless Archie will take them further. There are, of course, certain things I will miss about these magazines. There are other things that I won't miss at all, not even a bit.

Yet we've worked on designing more attractive contents pages; letters pages with heart and content; articles that aren't mindless hype pieces for obscure movies. We haven't always succeeded in everything we've tried. Probably no one needs to tell you that. We've changed the standard next issue ads and subscription ads so that rather than merely being merchandising pages, they might also entertain and excite you.

Now I certainly did not do these things alone. Dave Kraft kept a running correspondence with writers on article submissions, edited those pieces into publishable shape, and constantly reminded me that I was late with my editorials.

There's my refrain again.

Lenny Grow covered for me when Sol wanted to know why something was late (he sometimes turned me in, too, but hell, he covered for me as many times as

he could) and told me not to panic when Doug Moench frequently added an extra couple of pages to a story and there seemed no place for them. Barbara Altman worked on the visual layouts for the articles, usually against a last-minute deadline (especially if it was an article I'd written myself, like this issue's Billy Jack piece), and politely listened to my insane ideas for layouts. For listening politely if nothing else, I owe her thanks. "But Don," she must have thought more than once, "you want to use multiple images of the same photo and we have to put the book out in **how** many hours? Only three?"

Of course, one shouldn't overlook the writers and artists, as I've nearly done, because it is their efforts—as creators—that give any book life and identity. Devil-May-Care Doug Moench is one of the most disciplined writers I know, and even with his schedule, we still had time to rap about new movies. Thanks, Doug. And Bill Mantlo and I discussed new directions for the Tiger Sons, when Bill wasn't seeking me as Jumbo John's emissary, to learn why I was late **this** time.

George Perez is new to the black-and-white medium, and we spent many mornings discussing his art on the Sons of the Tiger. Mike Esposito raced deadlines; Mike Vosburg handled a strip that was a difficult challenge; and Jack Abel lent a helping hand against other deadlines. Thanks to all of you.

To list all the people who helped us make this a better book would take more space than allowable. But I've got to thank Marv Wolfman for listening to my ranting and raving about integrity and quality while he fought for much the same things.

And we'll be seeing each other right in these very pages, I'm sure.

Next month, as Archie begins a new era (the **newest** era of this or any other century), we'll feature a special James Bond issue—behind the scenes facts and photos from The Man With The Golden Gun, accompanied by another dynamic Neal Adams cover that is guaranteed to loosen your **gi** and take your breath away.

Hai-yah!

And just in case someone **is** reading these editorials:

Hang in there!

Don McGregor
Swan song of an editor unleashed!

"THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA,
BERKELEY CAMPUS..."

A DIFFERENT LESSON

IN BLOOD UNCHANGED!

WE'VE
MADE THEM
AWARE OF WHAT
WE WANT--! WE'VE
LET THEM KNOW THAT
WE WANT A FULLY AC-
CREDITED COURSE IN
RADICAL POLITICS AND
ALTERNATIVE
THEORY--!

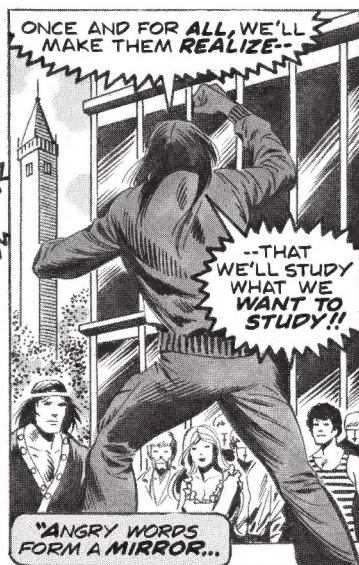
AND
THEY'VE
REJECTED
OUR PROPOSAL!
IS ANYONE SUR-
PRISED--?!

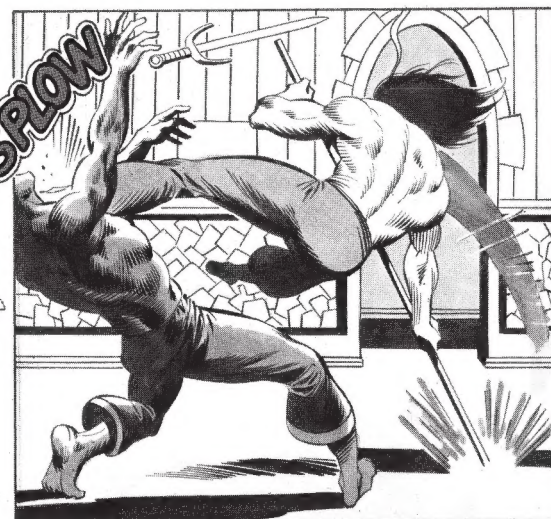
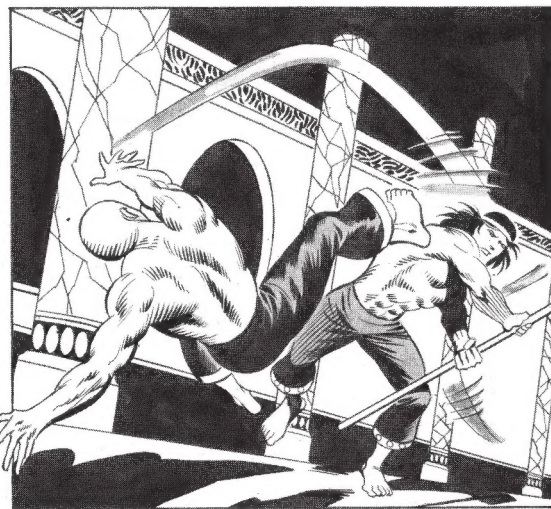
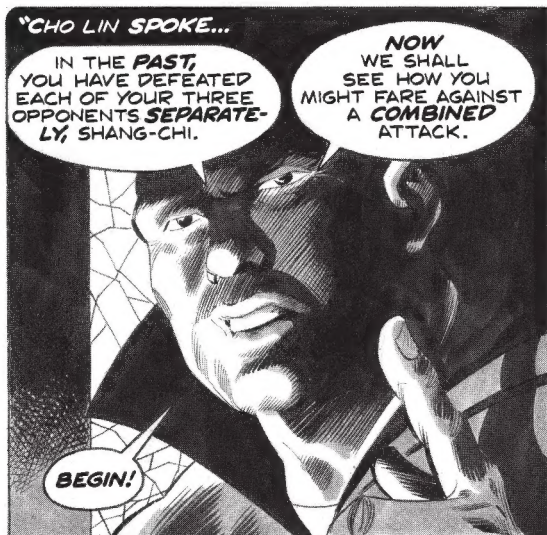
IS ANYONE
GOING TO DO
ANYTHING ABOUT
IT?!!

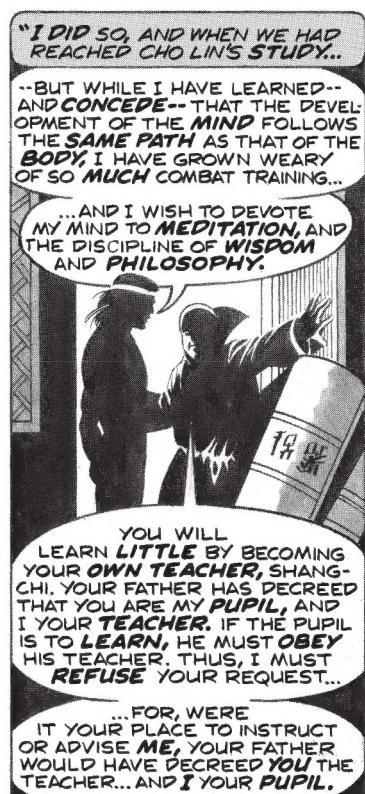
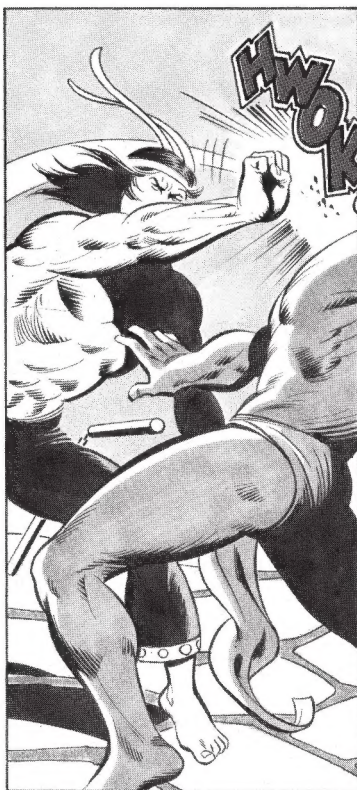
ADMIN
BUILDING

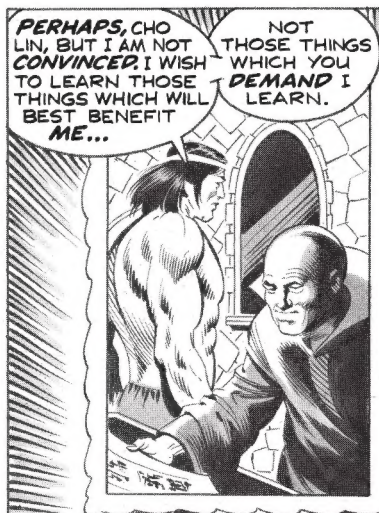
"IN HONAN, CHINA, I STUDIED UNDER
MY FATHER, HE WHO IS FU MANCHU. I
WAS TUTORED IN TRUTHS I NOW KNOW
TO BE DISTORTED... INDOCTRINATED WITH
VALUES I NOW SEE AS FALSE... AND LEC-
TURED IN POSTURES I NOW CONSIDER
EVIL. A PRISONER IN MY FATHER'S HONAN
FORTRESS, I WAS NEVERTHELESS COM-
PLACENT AND OBEIENT..."

"THUS, I HAVE COME TO THIS INSTITUTION TO OBSERVE
THOSE WHO ARE HERE TO LEARN, AND TO LEARN FROM
THEM. BUT I AM... CONFUSED. THEY MOVE FREELY
THROUGH THEIR SCHOOL, ABLE TO LEAVE WHENEVER
THEY WISH. THEY HAVE ADOPTED THEIR OWN VALUES
...BELIEVE IN PERSONAL TRUTHS... AND YET, IN THEIR
FREEDOM, THEY ARE DISSATISFIED AND REBELLIOUS..."



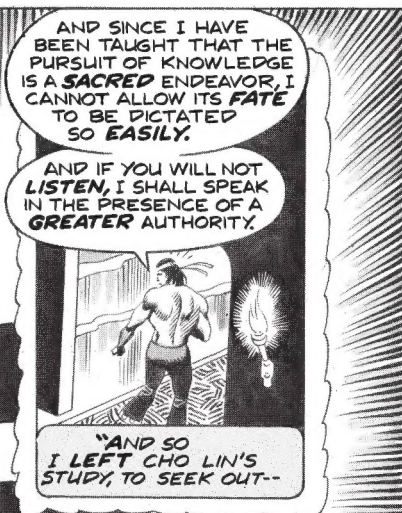






PERHAPS, CHO LIN, BUT I AM NOT CONVINCED. I WISH TO LEARN THOSE THINGS WHICH WILL BEST BENEFIT ME...

NOT THOSE THINGS WHICH YOU DEMAND I LEARN.



AND SINCE I HAVE BEEN TAUGHT THAT THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE IS A SACRED ENDEAVOR, I CANNOT ALLOW ITS FATE TO BE DICTATED SO EASILY.

AND IF YOU WILL NOT LISTEN, I SHALL SPEAK IN THE PRESENCE OF A GREATER AUTHORITY.

"AND SO I LEFT CHO LIN'S STUDY, TO SEEK OUT--



YOU--!!

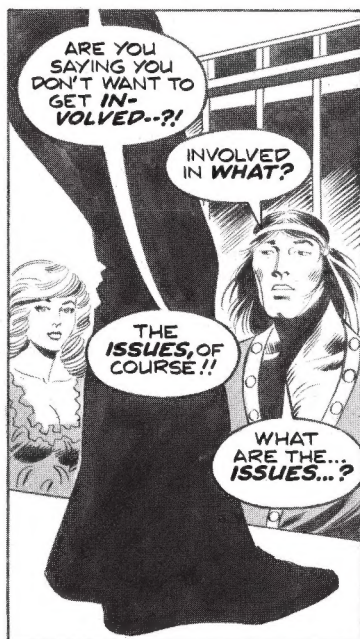
--?!



WHAT ABOUT YOU?! DON'T YOU WANT AN ORIENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM INSTITUTED HERE--?!

DON'T YOU WANT TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR OWN CULTURE-- RATHER THAN THE PLASTIC CULTURE OF AMERIKA--?!

I WISH TO LEARN OF ALL CULTURES, ALTHOUGH I HAVE DEVOTED MOST OF MY STUDIES TO MY HOMELAND.



ARE YOU SAYING YOU DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED--?!

INVOLVED IN WHAT?

THE ISSUES, OF COURSE!!

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES...?



THE STUDENT'S RIGHT TO STUDY WHAT HE WANTS --TO GET INVOLVED IN THE WORLD --TO LEARN ABOUT OTHER CULTURES AND OTHER REALITIES!!

I WILL TEACH YOU WHAT I KNOW OF MY CULTURE...

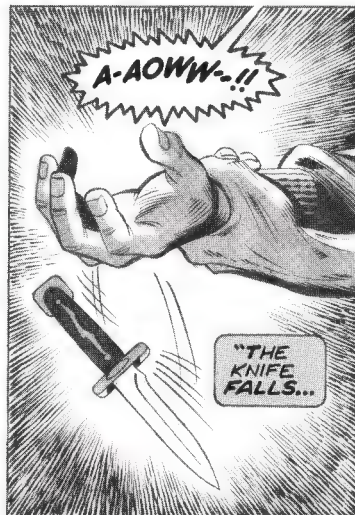
...IF YOU WILL TEACH ME OF YOURS...



LOOK, WISE ASS --WE DON'T NEED YOUR KIND ON THIS CAMPUS--AND WE KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT YOU--!!

ALIF... BEARS... UH-OH... PETERS AGAIN--AND THIS TIME HE'S STIRRING UP MORE TROUBLE THAN USUAL...







"BUT--

WAIT
A MINUTE--
WAIT UP--!



MY NAME'S LINDA.
WHAT'S YOURS--?

SHANG-CHI.

WELL, LISTEN,
SHANG-CHI--I ADMIRE
WHAT YOU JUST DID. I
DON'T BELIEVE IN SOLVING
PROBLEMS WITH VIOLENCE
EITHER.

THINGS HAVE BEEN
QUIET SINCE THE LATE
'60'S, BUT THEY WON'T
REMAIN QUIET MUCH
LONGER.

BUT-- I REALLY
JUST WANTED TO TELL
YOU TO WATCH OUT. THE GUY
YOU TUSSELED WITH-- PETERS
--IS PRETTY INFLUEN-
TIAL ON CAMPUS... AND HE
MIGHT WANT VENGEANCE...



THANK YOU... BUT
I HAVE CONFRONTED
VENGEANCE IN
THE PAST.

YEAH. YOU
PROBABLY HAVE...
AND I GUESS I REALLY
DON'T WANT YOU TO
RUN AWAY. I GUESS
I WANT YOU TO
STAY...

WHY?



PETERS IS LEADING A
STUDENT ACTION TO-
NIGHT. THEY PLAN TO TAKE
OVER THE ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING
...AND PETERS HASN'T
MADE ANY SECRET
ABOUT IT...

THE PRESIDENT OF
THE UNIVERSITY
EVEN KNOWS WHAT
THEY'RE UP TO... AND HE'S
APPEALED TO THE
GOVERNOR.

AND NOW
THE GOVERNOR
HAS OVERREACTIONED
--CALLED OUT THE
NATIONAL GUARD...

SHANG CHI
...IT COULD
BE ANOTHER
KENT STATE...



SO I'M
ASKING
YOU...

WILL YOU
COME? WILL
YOU TRY TO
STOP IT...?



I...

...DO
NOT
KNOW.

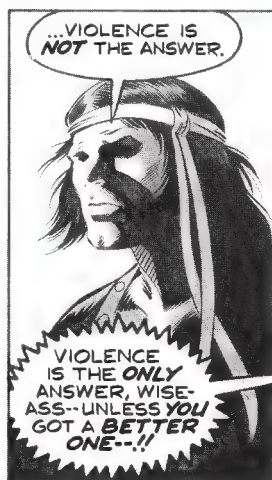
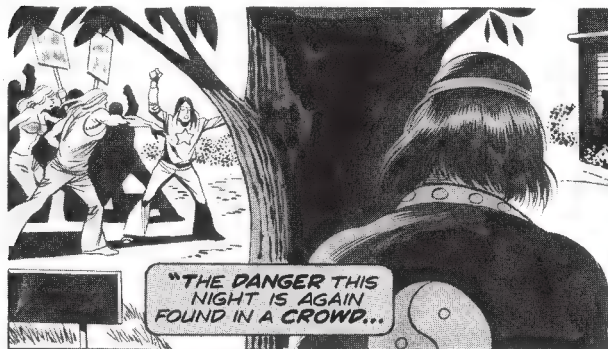
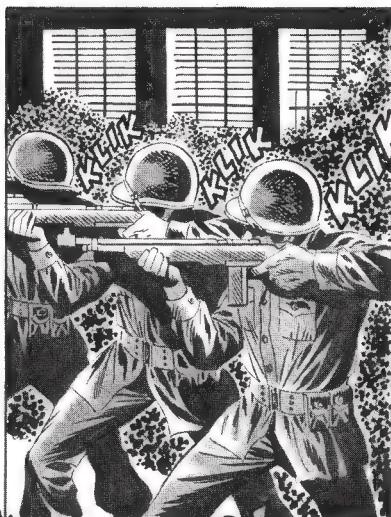
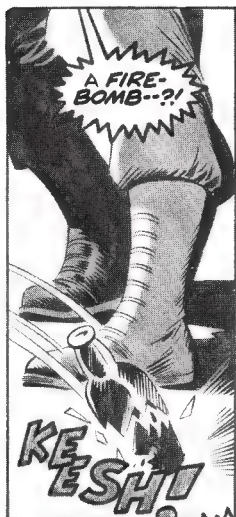


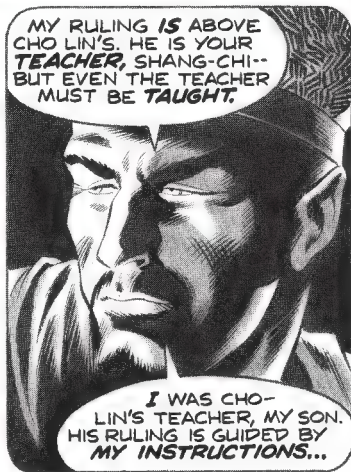
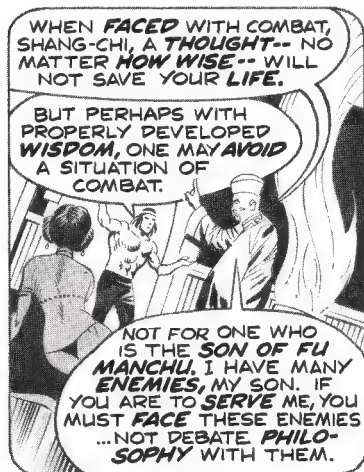
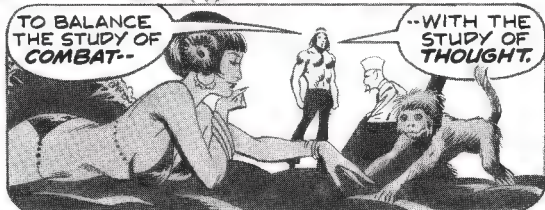
"HER WORDS
LINGER WITH
ME. SHE HAS
SPOKEN WITH
THE SOFT
CARRESS OF
COMPASSION,
BUT THERE
ARE OTHER
VOICES WHICH
ARE HARD AND
GRIM. THEY
ARE VOICES I
AM MORE
ACCUSTOMED
TO THAN THE
SOUND OF
COMPASSION.

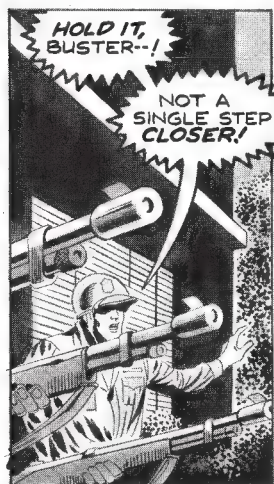
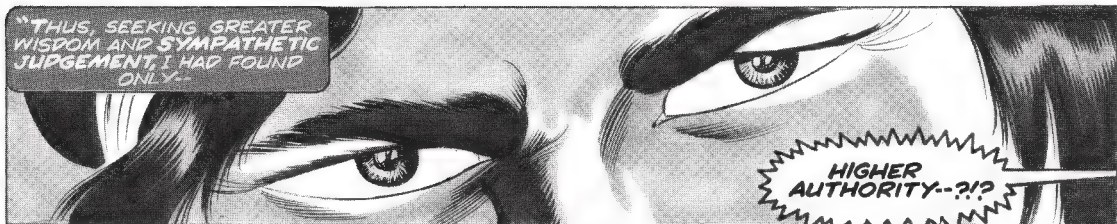
ALL RIGHT
--BRACE YOUR-
SELVES--!

HERE
THEY
COME....

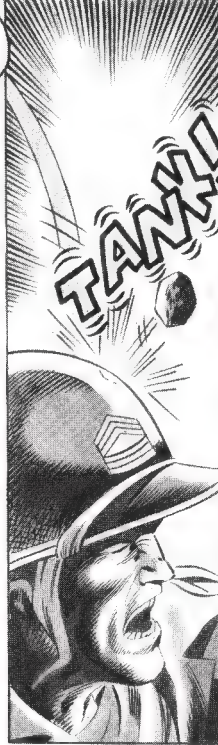








IF WE FIRE NOW
--EVEN A WARNING
SHOT--WE'LL START
A RIOT THE LIKES
OF WHICH--

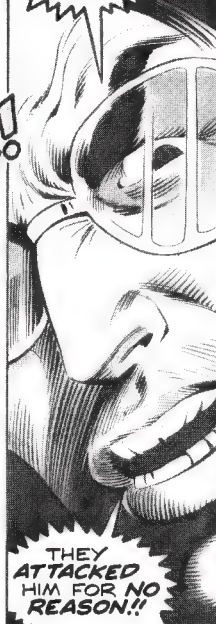


"HIS WEAPON..."



"--BROUGHT
UP IN REFLEX
TO THE
HURLED STONE..."

DID YOU SEE
THAT--?! ALL HE
WANTED TO DO
WAS TALK--AND
THEY HIT
HIM!!



THEY
ATTACKED
HIM FOR NO
REASON!!

WE WON'T
STAND FOR
ANY MORE--
OFF THE
PIGS!!



"A ROAR
WHICH
SHATTERS
THE NIGHT--!"

THEY'RE STILL
COMING-- THE
SHOT DIDN'T
STOP 'EM!!

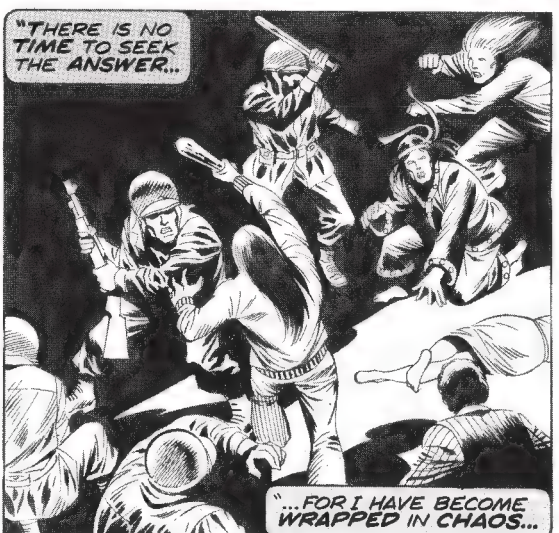
BLAM!



THEN LET'S
SEE WHAT OUR
TRUNCHEONS
CAN DO--!



"THE GUNSHOT... AND PANICKED
STUDENTS... BOTH REACHING THE GIRL AT
THE SAME TIME--! DOES SHE FALL FROM
ONLY ONE OF THEM--OR BOTH--?"



"THERE IS NO
TIME TO SEEK
THE ANSWER..."

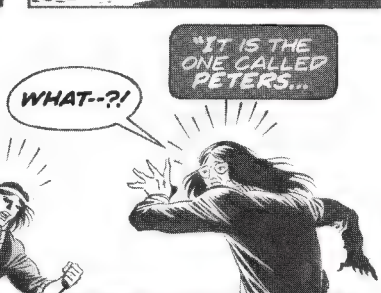
"...FOR I HAVE BECOME
WRAPPED IN CHAOS..."





ALL RIGHT, PUNK--I SAID FREEZE!!

AND I MEAN FREEZE!!



"IT IS THE ONE CALLED PETERS..."



"PETERS BEGINS TO RUN. THE SOLDIER'S WEAPON CLICKS. WILL HE FIRE--?"



"BUT MY SLIDEN MOVEMENT HAS STARTLED THE SOLDIER. HIS HAND JERKS..."



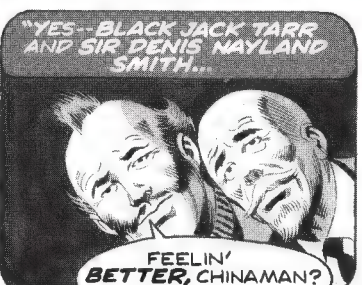
"PAIN."



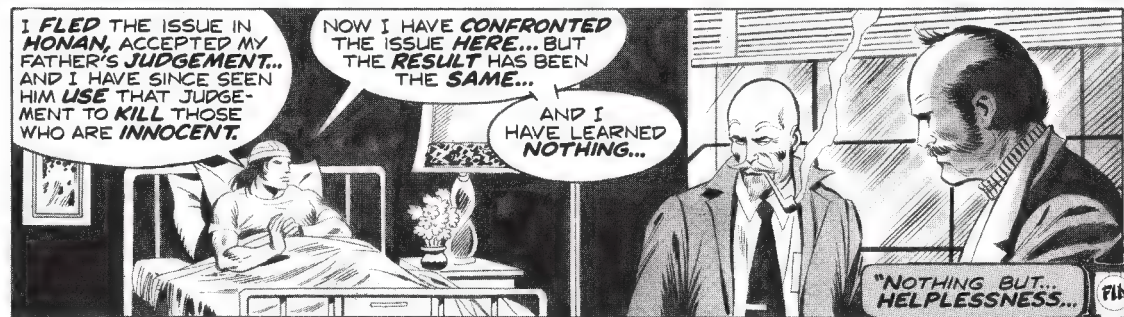
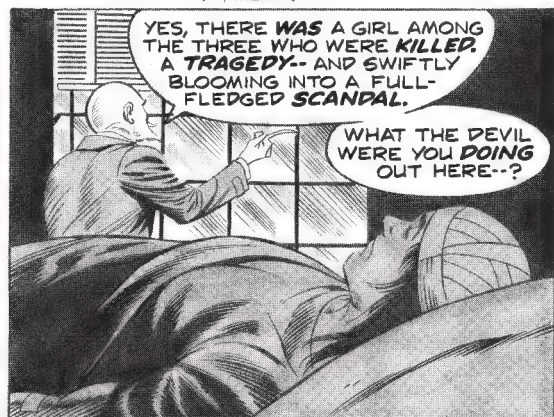
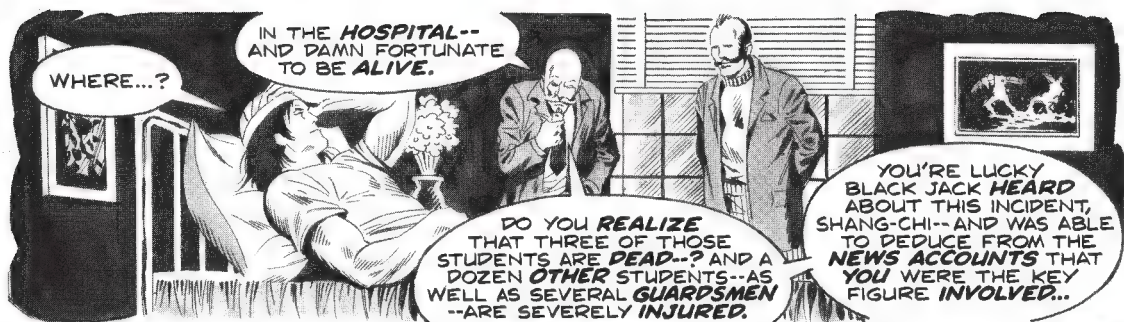
"DARKNESS HAS STOLEN MY SIGHT FOR A TIME I CANNOT MEASURE..."



"...FACES?"



FEELIN' BETTER, CHINAMAN?"





The Loner—does his violence stem from a God-given right, or from his inner frustration and rage?

DEATH AS A LONER!



Billy Jack must eternally run from his own self—until he can accept his spiritual guide.

By
Scott
Edelman

□ A) Paul Kurzy rests in the arena. Guns holstered, he stays hidden in his cave, letting his prey stalk *him*. It is the City—New York—with eight million and more stories to tell, too many of them cut off prematurely, too many novels with no FINIS, but only a mid-sentence “and then—”.

His opponent enters from the rear, steps forward. Shaky, hand hidden behind his back, Kurzy lets a neat smirk play on his lips as one end of his mouth tips toward the darkened and bilious New York City sky. Paul Kurzy sits.

Waiting.

A switchblade click echoes off the store fronts of the arena, breaking the 3 a.m. Times Square silence. Or is it Eighth Street? Greenwich Village? Park Slope?

“Gimme ya money, motherhumper,” says the stranger. Beads of sweat blossom on his face and begin trailing down his cheeks. “Now.”

But before he can even gesture at Paul Kurzy’s hands,

thrust deep into his trouser pockets (there must surely be some helluva roll in there—some helluva roll), a neat little hole appears in the mugger’s face and a streamer of skull shards, brain cells, and blood globules emerges directly opposite.

Paul Kurzy blows non-existent smoke from the tip of his imaginary Winchester, manifested in an ivory-handled .32 Automatic.

“You lose.”

□ B) “When they came for the Christ, Judas Iscariot stepped forward, kneeled, and kissed Him on the cheek. Then a guard grabbed Him by the arm, and asked Him if He was the one called Jesus. The Christ said yes.

“Two of them took Him by the shoulders and began pulling Him away. I ran towards Him with tears in my eyes, resenting that traitor Iscariot, and lopped an ear off a guard’s head.

“He shrieked, falling to his knees, bright red blood staining the dirty sand floor of our temple, and begged of Christ to heal him if He was truly the Messiah.

“The Christ looked at me compassionately and placed His palm over the injured man’s wound, and lo, when He removed His hand, the ear had sprouted once more.

“‘Dost thou think me a thief that you must come after me with swords? Dost thou not think my father could send a hundred thousand of his angels to save me if such were my wishes? O ye of little faith.’

“He was crucified the next day.”

□ C) Billy Jack strides like a cavalry man to the rescue, and the soundtrack swells as he approaches the



Revenge is unfulfilling for those who find it easy to achieve.

ice-cream parlor. Bernard looks up from the gasping Indian boy stretched out on the floor, whose solar plexus he had just punished, and staggers back at sight of Billy. "Uh-oh."

Cindy, Sunshine and Kit, faces covered with flour, watch Billy and Bernard as if they were attending a tennis match, heads moving from right to left to right. Cindy's face flushes with the anticipation of vindication.

Bernard looks back at Dinosaur, his hulking friend, but the leer on the dolt's uncomprehending face fails to reassure him.

Bernard gestures at Billy Jack with a flour-filled scoop.

"Remember, before you try anything... this is *our* territory."

Billy shakes his head sadly from side to side, and wipes a bit of white from Sunshine's face.

"Bernard, I want you to know that when Jean and the kids tell me that I'm supposed to control my violent temper and be passive and non-violent like they are, I try... I really try.

"But when I see this girl of such a beautiful spirit so degraded...

"...this little girl who is so special to us that we call her God's little gift of sunshine... and I think... of the number of years she's going to have to carry in her memory the savagery of this idiotic moment of yours...



You must allow no one to obstruct your path; you must learn to act, not react.



Carol (Teresa Laughlin)—where others failed, she could not help but continue to strive.

"...I...
 "...just...
 "...go...
 "...BERSERK!!!"

Screaming the last word, Billy whirls around and smashes Bernard in the stomach with a karate chop. As Dinosaur lurches at him, Billy lifts him and heaves him through the store's plate-glass window.

After walking over to Sunshine and making sure that she's perfectly unharmed, with even the tears in her eyes drying, Billy steps outside and gets the stuffing kicked out of him by twelve men, one of whom smashes him over the back of the head with a stick.

Made your choice? If not, reread once more. This is important, for you'll be scored on this later. If not in these pages, then in a dark alley where you won't have as much time to think.

Ready? Good.

Isolating these three examples, out of context, which is art? Which is pulp fiction? And which is propaganda? What is the *real* difference between these three artforms?

What is violence? What is self-defense? Are either of these two acts justifiable at any time?

These days, honesty is held at a premium. In fact, its appearance is so rare that Lloyd's of London might just insure you against ever coming in contact with it.

And when it *does* confront us, we disbelieve it, deny its existence.

Listen:

"Ya love me? Whaddaya mean ya love me? If ya loved me ya wouldn't try to make me stop:

- a) smokin'
- b) smokin' dope
- c) cheatin' on ya
- d) shootin' horse
- e) drinkin'
- f) bein' me!"

Again:



Gus Greymountain was the only one able to end the senseless slaughter of students.

"Let me be self-destructive, willya? Maybe it's for my own good."

So when someone we know loves us so much that he or she is willing to sacrifice all to ensure our own safety, to make sure that we're alive and free, and to wipe the fog off our windshield when we're riding down that highway of life, we tend to disbelieve. And when that person happens to be a complete stranger to us, belief becomes an impossibility.

Enter Tom Laughlin and Delores Taylor. Also enter Frank and Teresa Christina. People with a message. People who see us standing on the ledge of a building on fire, and who become indignant when they learn that all the nets are in the hands of those nuts who stand on the sidelines placing bets on whether your falling body will land "heads" or "tails."

Enter BILLY JACK.

It was only a short while after the completion of BORN LOSERS (an earlier Laughlin film which is best ignored) that Tom Laughlin began working with American International Pictures on BILLY JACK, with the prerequisite that the creators of the picture would be given *full* and *complete* creative control. Needless to say, AIP fell through, and Tom threatened to cease production of the film if the company did not fulfill its promise. After discussing his decision with Delores Taylor (who is his real wife, aside from playing his screen wife in both BILLY JACK films), they stopped filming having come to the conclusion that it was more important to be truthful to their artistic muse than to continue working as either actors or directors.

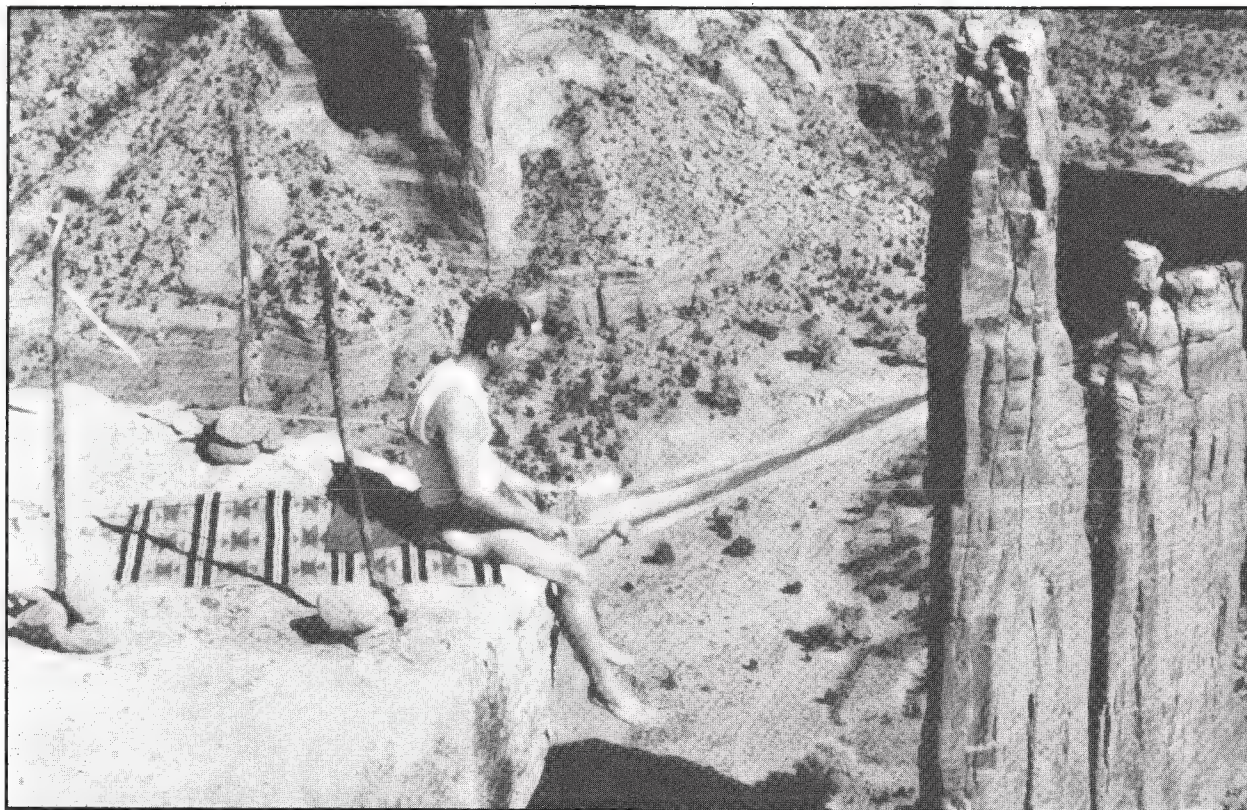
After four months of legal hassles, Tom received full rights to the picture, and began making a deal with Joe Levine of Avco Embassy, in order that the film might be completed. That deal fell through at the last minute, but the picture was finally put back into production in April of 1970 for Twentieth Century-Fox.

Crucial to the new deal was the agreement that Twentieth Century-Fox had no rights in the picture until its delivery date. After completion of filming, and during the final editing, Tom Laughlin met with Richard Zanuck, who wanted to cut some scenes from the film. Many of these scenes were improvisational in nature, and were ones which lent much of the honesty and spontaneity to BILLY JACK.

Tom Laughlin refused to cut anything, but agreed to allow Twentieth Century-Fox to give the completed film three screenings to test audiences. However, before those screenings could be made, Tom received word that Fox had removed the completed film from the laboratory vault. In retaliation, Tom and Delores took the sound track from the sound laboratory, thus rendering the 250,000 feet of film in the company's possession totally useless. Without that soundtrack, the film would either have to be entirely reshot or redubbed, the second being virtually impossible due to the vast amount of improvisation involved.

Tom and Delores eventually decided that it would be better for the public to never see BILLY JACK, than to have them view an emasculated version. Their lawyers brought suit against Twentieth Century-Fox, at the same time notifying Fox that an erased reel of tape would be sent to them for each week that they prevented Tom and Delores from buying the film back. Responding to this, Fox sold back the film, and rights to it, for close to one million dollars.

But even then the troubles were not over. An arrange-



After fasting for eleven days, Billy Jack hopes to find his spiritual guide while suspended over the edge of a mesa.



While Billy Jack lies near death due to his callousness towards his vision, Jean hopes to revive his will to live.

ment was made with Warner Brothers to release BILLY JACK, which resulted in a \$51 million dollar antitrust lawsuit. It was Tom Laughlin's belief that "Warner Bros. did not believe in the picture and dumped down on it." But eventually the film was released and did catch on, developing a cult of its own after the birth pangs died down.

I mention all these troubles for a reason. Those in it for the buck will draw the line at the sacrifice of a career; those in it for the buck refuse to allow their furniture to be repossessed, refuse to allow their children to sleep on hardwood floors. Those in it for the buck find better ways. More profitable ways. Those in it for the buck sell out.

So when I tell you this story, I do so only because it's difficult to believe in honesty, and this may help ease your mind when you try to convince yourself of the honesty that is BILLY JACK.

What film director or producer, upon receiving governmental permission to use portions of Indian land to shoot a film, would not use that land unless the permission was corroborated by an Indian OK? The BILLY JACK team did.

The curtain of love which hangs over the actions of Billy Jack Enterprises makes it difficult to put credit where credit is due, but most of it belongs directly to Tom Laughlin and Delores Taylor.

Which results in a very interesting dilemma.

Neither of them are cinematographers; they are people with a message to put across, not experts in celluloid. So when you find clumsy moments in the films, remember that.

According to *Variety*, BILLY JACK was the number two grosser for 1973, aced out only by THE POSEIDON ADVENTURE. So another question arises. What does a normal film maker do when he has a hit on his hands? Why, make a sequel of course!

THE RETURN OF BILLY JACK, SON OF BILLY JACK, ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET BILLY JACK, BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE BILLY JACKS... *ad nauseum*.

But what does a Tom Laughlin or Delores Taylor do? Create THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK—the first Kung Fu flick to emphatically imply that the hero is in the wrong for even *using* his knowledge of the martial arts. Violence only begets violence.

As of this writing, *Variety* lists THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK as number one grosser. But I predict, here and now, that if a third film is made, it will be a complete and utter financial failure.

Why?

Because the public is not yet ready for complete honesty. The public, lured into the theatres to see Billy Jack kick out teeth and shoot people between the eyes as he had done in the first film, was disappointed. THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK, a hefty 170 minutes long

(that's two hours and fifty minutes, to those without electronic calculators) is short on the sort of action that made fans of most viewers of the original BILLY JACK. The scenes excerpted for teleplay as commercials represent virtually the total Kung Fu action clips in the entire picture.

(Note: The martial arts style depicted in the BILLY JACK films is not Kung Fu, but rather, *hapkido*, a Korean style of karate.)

The viewers of this second film, tempted into the theatres by all the promos, word-of-mouth, and their personal memories of the action in the previous movie (which *had* a message, though it was rather neatly hidden!), flocked to the sequel, only to sit through a feature-length dissertation on the injustice of Indian treatment in America.

As I've said, a filmmaker more receptive to the public's moods would have made a sequel that *increased* the amount of violence. Let them get what they want. Let the series propagate.

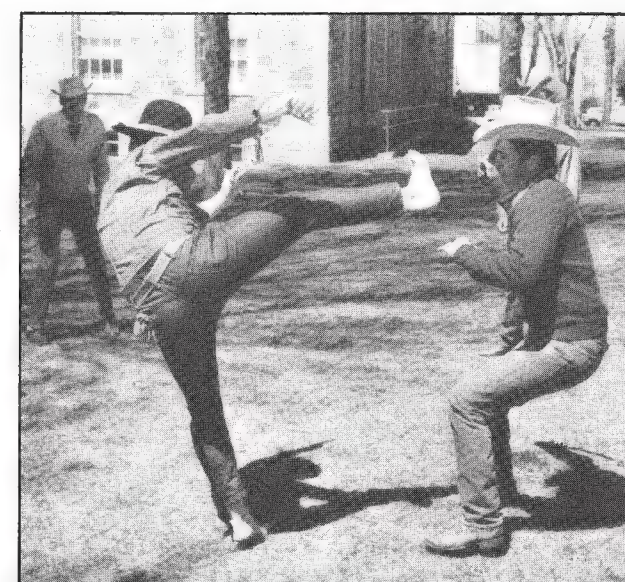
But Tom Laughlin and Delores Taylor did nothing of the sort. They utilized the popularity of the first film, almost exploiting its popularity, its guaranteed audience which would eagerly pay to see a sequel, no matter what it consisted of. So they made a propaganda film.

Ssssh!

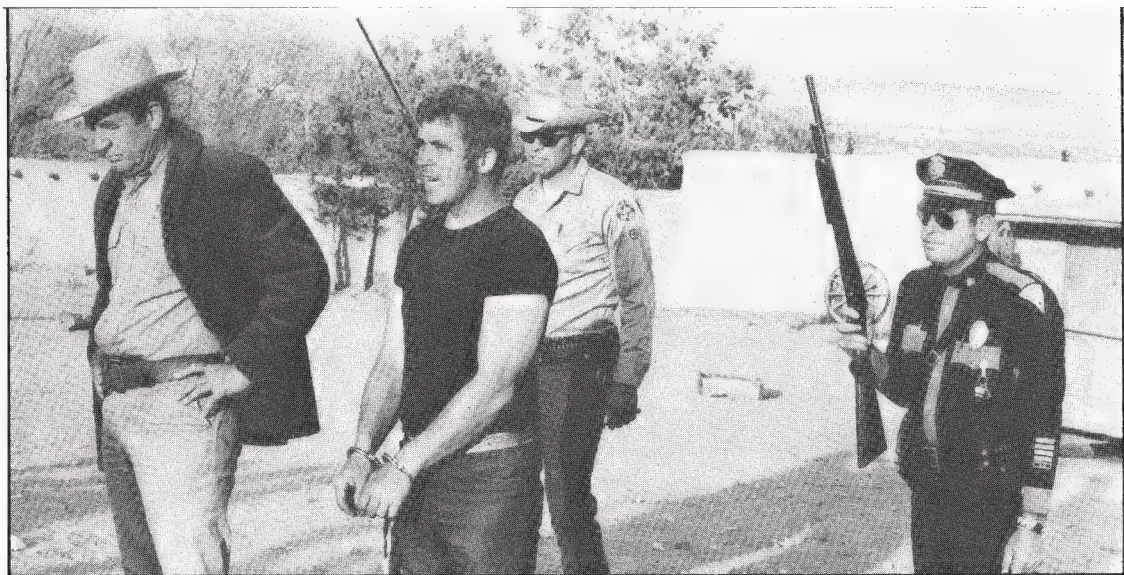
Quiet down.

Now, there's nothing inherently wrong with "propaganda." It's just that people who've lived through the 1950's generally believe that the word "Communist" always precedes it, while everyone else thinks that it's a way of being fooled or lied to. It isn't, *always*. At times, it's a way of being told the truth.

Since, as I've already said, we refuse to believe that anyone would really, openly tell us the truth, we wouldn't bother going to a movie entitled THE TRUTH. We'd



For some, it is easy to be led astray from the path of the Fourth Way.



For the sake of Jean and the Freedom School students, Billy's love compels him to turn himself over to the police.

have to be tricked, seduced. We'd have to think that we were going to see a nice, noxious, beat-em-up Kung Fu western. And, if we wanted to see that western desperately enough, we'd be willing to sit through an hour trailer titled *THE TRUTH*—being, in this case, discussions and panels on the subject of both Indian's and children's rights. But the real message, that jewel of an idea that makes this film magnificent, despite its flaws, is that...

...All violence is wrong. Just 'cause you're hopped up on revenge doesn't make your case any more sincere—most of the time, it makes those around you *doubt* that cause, 'cause brother, you ain't thinkin' straight!

On the tenth day of a fast, during a drug-induced vigil, Billy meets with an Indian spirit, who tells him that to reach across to the Other Side, to have a guardian beside him telling him at all times the correct way to live, to have a spiritual advisor... he must find the Fourth Way.

As a test, Billy is told to slap three men across the face, one at a time:

The first punches him back, thus plummeting to the level of his attacker, and allowing himself to be diverted from his path. This man knows only of the First Way.

The second, possessed of knowledge of the Second Way, does not descend to the physical, but merely harangues Billy for daring to strike him. He does not quite lower himself to his attacker's level, but he still allows himself to be diverted from his path.

The Third Way is demonstrated by a man in a toga, surrounded by disciples. He answers Billy's violence by expressing regret and compassion—he is sorry that Billy must demonstrate his manhood in such a way.

The Fourth Way? *That* Billy must find for himself. It will not be shown to him. Billy is told, though, that he must live to *act*, not to simply *re-act* to things around him.

We should not allow the violence surrounding us to mold us into men of violence.

Later, after Billy escapes from the police with a bullet wound in his back, he almost dies because, in the words of his Indian friends, "He failed to heed the vision."

While lying on the edge of death, Billy once more sees

the Great Woman of his previous vision. She tells him that he has one more chance to heed the vision, thus she will not claim his life. She wants him to live, reject his violent ways, and become an example to all men of true peace. He still has a chance.

At the end of the film (to quote the press releases), Billy has "found the fourth and ultimate way to inner peace." There is no explanation of exactly what this means, but one supposes that Billy must now be one step above those who know the Third Way; i.e., a Jesus who could not have been crucified.

At least, we know one thing for sure—there should be no third film, for two reasons:

1) The public, who has the final say as to what films live and what films die, will make *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK* into a success only because they expected it to be the same as *BILLY JACK*. They would mistrust a third film, thinking it would be on the same honest level as *TRIAL*, and thus might no longer flock to the box office. Good guys may not finish last, but at the box office they never finish in the top ten.

2) Having found the Fourth Way, it would seem that Billy would have no more *need* for karate or violence, and no one will go to a theatre to see a film in which there is no conflict. I mean, what kind of a story line can there be about a man who has found ultimate peace? Take "ultimate" to mean: "A peace that can never be taken away." There's no conflict, there's no plot, and while it might be aesthetically pleasing to watch a celluloid guru chant for an hour, there's no point.

The Billy Jack saga appears to be over. Billy Jack the Great American Hero, has found his peace while trying to lead us to ours. A worthy climax to the Billy Jack dream would be the use of profits to build actual Freedom Schools, such as the one in the film, throughout the country.

I mean, not only honesty, but philanthropy and charity, *too*?

Who could believe in *that*, anymore?

So which did you choose—A, B, or C?

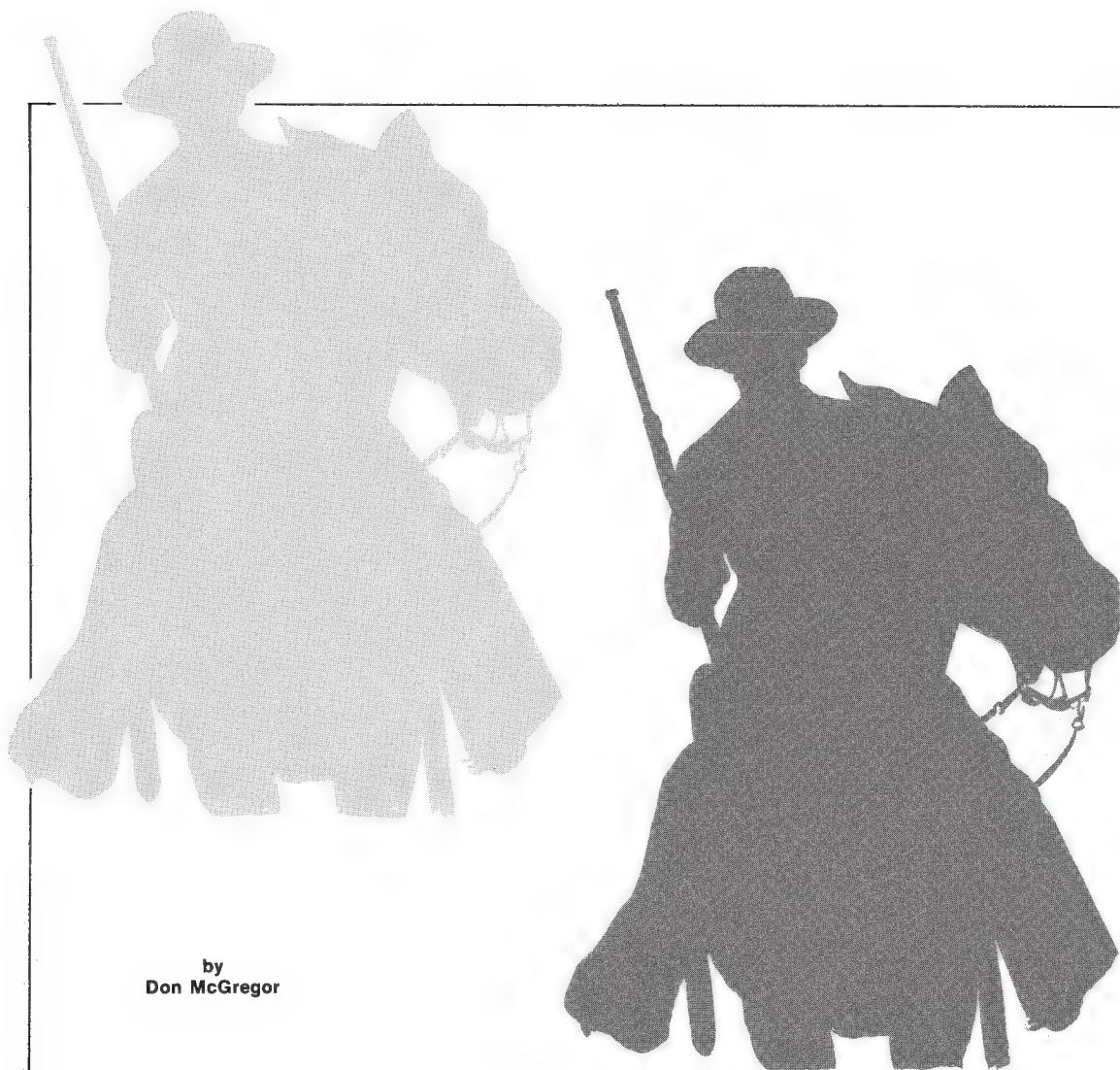
Oh.

You lose.



VERDICT ON THE

TRIAL OF BILLY JACK



by
Don McGregor

Question: What do Billy Jack and Richard M. Nixon have in common?

The above line is known as the "grabber," the initial thrust that purportedly will lead the casual reader on to the next line and the next paragraph until—lo and behold—he has turned the page and ended up "grabbed" by the author's intent and purposes.

Nevertheless, the question is valid, despite its audacity.

And it is the answer to that question that directs the main thrust of this article.

The question is valid because Billy Jack has become a well-promoted, cannily-crafted hero for the apathetic '70s. That's not meant as a put-down of the character or of the integrity of the creators of the Billy Jack phenomenon. Somehow, you just want to believe in Billy Jack Enterprises without asking *any* questions.

And that's the danger!

Think about it.

The second Billy Jack film, *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK*, cost about \$2,500,000 to film. In the first week of its opening, it added three million dollars was spent on advertising—a blitzkrieg of the television airwaves and other entertainment media. Computerized trajectories estimated that *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK* would see a profit within ten days of its release.

It did.



Riding straight out of the socially unaware "B" westerns of the 1930-1950s, into the socio-political maelstrom of the 1970s: BILLY JACK!



The bleakness of impending death pervades victims and soldiers alike; it is going to be ugly, but they must obey orders—that's what they've been conditioned to do, isn't it?

Now, before you get the wrong impression, there certainly is nothing wrong with a company making a profit on its film. Certainly, there are few endeavors in movies or any other art that can be made without some type of profit calculated or anticipated. But the amounts connected with Billy Jack indicate that Tom Laughlin's and Delores Taylor's brainchild has tapped social consciousness, delivering an intense and impassioned statement that is founded in honesty.

One *does* want to believe in honesty.

And, hopefully, this article does not mire in biased protest nor fanatical blind devotion. **THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK** has a tendency to divide people into opposing sides. Movie critics find themselves alienated and reacting with hostile predilections. Judith Crist prophesied that the film would die at the box office.

Boy, talk about going out on a limb in print.

So: What *do* Billy Jack and Richard M. Nixon have in common?

Manipulation. The ability to sell themselves as a product—only the movie product is not a President, it is a cinema

hero that is transplanted from the "B" Westerns of the 1930s into the contemporary world.

Smart move, that. From the first moments in the original **BILLY JACK** film, when Tom Laughlin comes riding up to a group of corporate and law officials who are about to slaughter horses for dog meat, there is no doubt that the figure is an updating of those earlier heroes.

Buck Jones, one of the more popular Western stars of the 30s, developed a routine of popping a stick of gum into his mouth just moments before he would go into action. The audience was tipped off immediately when he took out that piece of gum: "That's it!" was the collective thought, "Old Buck has stood all he can stand and he can't stand no more. He's going to set this whole thing right." And while the audience cheered, that *exactly* what he did!

Well, Billy Jack, with variations (Billy takes off his boots and socks before he goes into action) develops its own routines and, within two films, has created a formula that is at once effective and yet as simplistic as those 1940 "B" Westerns.

They could afford their simplicity—they were not reflections of

reality, nor commentaries on contemporary corruption and established organizations. The simplicity weakens the important arguments that **THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK** raises. The political and corporate villains, reduced to the cardboard status of a "B" Western saloon corporate proprietor or crooked town judge, become broad lampoons and caricatures that almost defy credibility.

Tom Laughlin has, at least, taught movie makers a lesson, and hopefully it is one that will filter into other popular media. A point of view, a message, an artist's interpretation or insight *can* have merchandising value; indeed, it is often the individual method of execution in conveying those interpretations and insights that provides the audience with material that isn't a carbon copy of a film they saw the week before. The success of **THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK** implies that all, quote: "entertainment stories," cynical unquote, need not be mindlessly bland and devoid of a personal touch; nor must a film that has a, quote: "serious message," cynical unquote, be dull and sedate. The attempts at relevance in popular media during the late '60s is a hideous example of turning a legitimate

word (relevance) into a detestable cliché. They forgot to give their protagonists and dramatic narrative as much strength as their themes. They forgot the simple elements of storytelling structure.

Tom Laughlin and the rest of the associates of Billy Jack Enterprises, for whatever other faults they may have, did not forget that basic knowledge.

THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK begins where the first film ended, and when the third film arrives (there is no doubt there will be a third film, the whole second film seems to be a set-up for a third, it could easily be titled. THE DISCIPLE OF BILLY JACK, but I'm certain they won't be *that* blatant. They wouldn't . . . *would they?*)

The film proper opens with some beautiful photography over Monument Valley, Arizona, following the serene flight of an owl, gliding past poetic sweeps of limitless sky and natural rock sculptures of incredible design. The photography in TRIAL is vastly superior to its predecessor, although the editing is as abominably patched together as it was in the first.

Statistics appear over the poetic vision, recounting the number of dead and wounded at such real tragedies as Kent State, South Carolina State, Jackson State and Southern University.

Real people dying and lost in real events. Relating fictional events to real

events, as commentary and serious study, is a worthwhile endeavor. And alone, those statistics flashed on to the screen are sobering, but there is a vague, undefined distaste left marked on some distant corner of the mind when the *fictional* characters, no matter how realistically portrayed, are presented as statistics in the same manner as the real deaths. Somewhere, real people are trying to live with the losses of these moments. The events here can attempt to shed light on those violent conflicts, and probably the film makers intended the inclusion of their Freedom School catastrophe merely to reinforce their image as occurring in the "real" world.

Jean Roberts, the heroine of TRIAL, is being interviewed by reporters about the events that led up to the slaughter of Freedom School. One sympathetic reporter remains after the others have left, and Jean tells her the story.

Delores Taylor is not an actress supreme—no one will claim that, and at times the awkwardness with which she will deliver a line is distracting, but the total effect of projected honesty and heartfelt emotion more than compensates for any such lacking.

We fade back to Billy Jack's trial, for the events that occurred in the first film, and Tom Laughlin makes his first appearance sitting on the witness chair, facing courtroom interrogation.

Laughlin's image is perfect for the archetypical hero, calm and poised, always in command of the situation. Also, he has been given the best lines, so that whenever anyone dares snare him in a conversation, Billy Jack makes his points with unerring accuracy, usually at the other's expense.

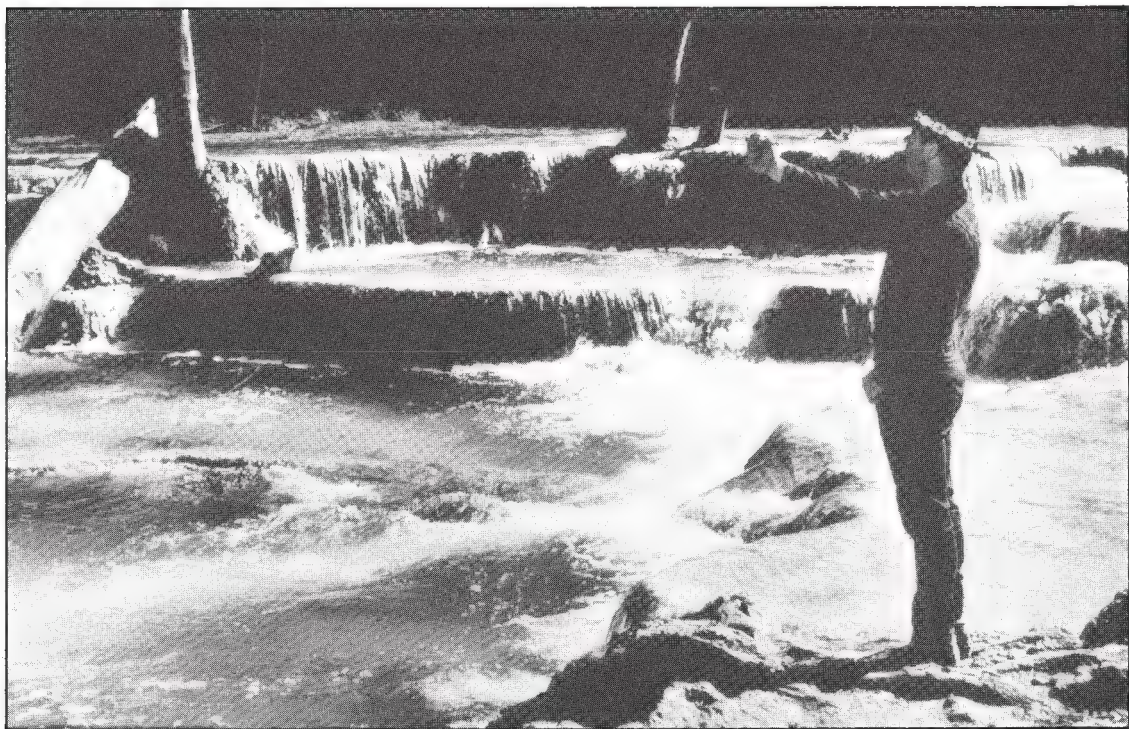
When Billy doesn't have the clever line, Jean does. When she is brought to the stand and her credibility and honesty are questions by the prosecutor, she comments, "I feel terribly sorry for your children, Mr. Williams."

He falls for it! Talk about being a straight man for a punchline. "You feel sorry for my children?" he asks, with the innocence of a sheltered child.

That's all Jean needs. "Yes, and you, too. You know me and you know I don't lie. It must be terribly degrading for you to pretend in front of all these people that I do—just to earn your money."

Well, if he wasn't degraded before, he sure is now. The movie audience cheers almost as vocally as the courtroom audience, but when one thinks back on it, though the set-up is superb, one wonders just how Jean happened to know the prosecutor and how he should know, in a world of duplicity, that she stands for truth, justice and the American way!

Billy returns to the stand to answer questions, and, naturally, he is younger than the prosecutor and therefore much



Ritual often precludes transcendental experiences; here, Billy Jack directs puffs of smoke to the four winds.



Another manifestation of Indian mythology—the Eagle, symbolic omen that has sought Billy Jack out.



Delores Taylor and Bong Soo Han engage in physical exercise, for bodily conditioning is well known to affect mental tone—the physical and the metaphysical travel hand-in-hand.

more sincere and less open to such hazards as falling prey to devastating punchlines. Billy's return to the stand is little more than a device to let him recount a My Lai type incident that he was involved in when he was a member of the military. Suddenly, Billy is a Colonel Anthony Herbert figure, but not to worry, he becomes many figures during the unfolding of the film.

We flashback to Vietnam, where a platoon of American soldiers lead South Vietnamese villagers into a trench. Before you know it, the soldiers are ordered to execute the entire group and machine guns start blazing while Billy, the only man to refuse to cooperate, listens in horror. A young child, somehow not making it to the trench, comes running into the scene. A soldier appears behind him, raises a rifle and blows the child's brains out!

The emotional imagery is effective. The audience isn't allowed to duck away from the event as it is happening.

But . . .

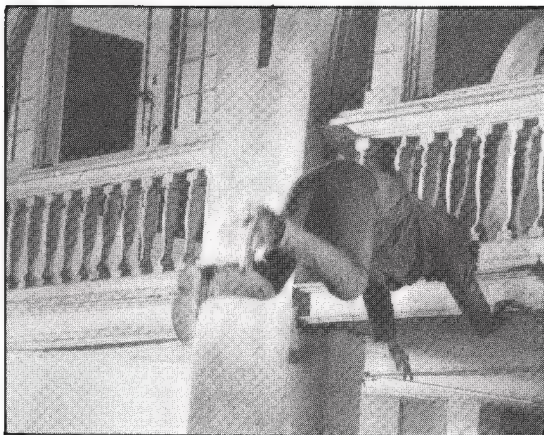
While the brutality baits the audience for a response (and most dramatic narrative is manipulative), there is a simplistic nature to the proceedings that is disturbing. *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK* uses real events without much more than emotional exploitation, atrocities that will certainly elicit response, but—as with this scene—without probing the hows and whys of such a mind-staggering contemporary nightmare. Slaughters reduced to entertainment gambits. The audience is enraged at the senseless act, but in the same manner that they would become enraged watching a Western where the bad guys kill off an innocent.

Still, in all fairness, the scene does what the makers intended it to do. It leaves the audience sympathetic to their protagonist, and as a story element, it works consummately.

The courtroom is hardly convinced of Billy's integrity and gives him a jail sentence for the manslaughter of Bernard Posner. During the time of his sentence, the kids from the school find an abandoned military academy and start anew. Before you know it (these kids are miraculous), they have set up a radio station, sound studio, child care center and courses of incredible variety.

It is a bit incredulous. But, as with most things here, there is no room left for question. The statement is made, this is the way it was, without ever showing us how it could actually work. You have to accept the premise at face value. If the superficial voice-over tells you it works, why then—simply—it works.

The school rapidly becomes a Ralph Nader-type consumer protection system also. Seems there ain't nothing they can't do, including rigging up lie detectors that can tell if a man is lying even when his voice is being registered from a television set. These are some incredible kids. They



seem to have no personal hang-ups, no sexual impulses, and no negative traits at all—as if someone were afraid that one blemish on one student would tarnish their image.

What really happens is that it makes them unbelievable.

Anyway, they also start programs concerned with child abuse, and Jean lectures before a committee of doctors. One doctor asks Jean, “Your complete claim then is that by loving these battering parents instead of punishing or confining them—that *that* actually works in stopping further beatings of their children?”

“Absolutely,” Jean answers with conviction.

She answers nearly everything with conviction. And honesty.

The honesty may be sincere, but one certainly hopes Jean is at least thinking

of separating the parents from the child until they have had time to work out this theory of love, else there might not *be* a child left to save by the time the parents respond to all this care they are receiving.

And the kind of horrors that can happen to a young, defenseless child can seldom be rectified.

Since there is a lack of space to comment on the entire unfolding of the film, the next events will be briefly noted. Billy is released from jail and reunited with Jean (a very well-filmed segment with tasteful sentiment), and then returns to the school, where he is hailed as the conquering student. One of the kids, Carol (in reality Tom Laughlin's daughter, Teresa Laughlin) sings him a song that has lyrics such as, “Don't turn back, Billy Jack! I am crying are you dying just for me?” It's too bad that this scene wasn't done as tastefully as Billy's reunion with Jean (who, most of you probably realize, is played by Laughlin's wife).

Allusions of Christ aside, Billy begins to take in the daily routine of the school, meeting with the resident Martial Arts teacher, Master Han (Bong Soo Han). What he's doing there and how he came to be there is never fully explained, but it gives Billy a change to show his *hapkido* talents; both Billy and Master Han show off for each other before new plot complications can begin.

But when they begin, they *begin*.

Blue Elk, a local Indian leader, arrives on the campus to ask Jean for help. Running Deer's family is trapped by a blizzard that is occurring in the mountains. The drastic weather change takes a moment to get used to: one moment they are in shirt sleeves rolling around on karate mats, the next they are on skis rescuing Running Deer.

Bringing the frost-bitten hunter (he needed food for his family and ended up on Posner territory) to a nearby hospital, one of the interns refuses to work on him because he is an Indian.

The audience tenses.

Is this it? Is Billy finally going to go into action?

But no, Billy doesn't remove his boots and socks. He does become a threatening presence, even though his voice is very low and controlled. “Tell me, what would you do if he were a white man and you could treat him?” When the doctor answers, Billy quietly orders him to “Show me.”

The tension is broken when Doc (played by Victor Izay) breaks into the room. No, Billy isn't going to start righting those wrongs yet, but it's a safe bet that he will before the film is out.

After that confrontation, one situation after another occurs rapidly. The school bus is stopped and the girls are frisked by policemen who take liberties with the situation, while other cops use night sticks on a youth who has thrown a tomato at them.

Billy breaks the event up by running at



Stop motion! Here, a mere milli-second away from disaster, we catch an unidentified stuntman about to enact one of the most convincing feats in *TRIAL*. Look out below!



Beyond the Fourth Way—toward which Billy Jack aspires—lies non-violence; and therein is born the dilemma . . . to let a friend take a beating, or to flow into brutal action?

them and making them scatter. But he still hasn't put that good old Martial Arts knowledge into practice. With each encounter, the film makers lead the audience to expect—even to anticipate—that this will be the time that Billy loses his cool and cuts some of these dastardly villains down to size.

If things are going badly for the school, they are going worse for the Indian reservation. Posner and a group of politicians go on a hunting trip on Indian land, and Billy gathers some of the tribe together to run them off. They do, but not before they take pictures of all these pompous, influential, immoral establishment hucksters with their girl friends. Candid shots for the folks back home, you understand.

Posner confronts Billy. "Ah, you've really gone too far this time, Billy. You're making a terrible mistake photographing those men."

Billy looks him dead in the eye and replies, "Y'know, the last time one of you Posners uttered that lousy cliché, one of you got killed. Tell me, don't you ever learn?"

Never!

The bad guys start making things rough. Their motivations are never entirely clear; they seem to have little purpose other than to hassle the school or the reservation. One wonders what they hope to gain.

The paperback version of the movie

suggests that they want to prod Billy into violence, so that he will have broken his parole—but that doesn't make much sense, either. If they wanted Billy taken care of, it would have been much easier to have it happen while he was in jail; or, if they were afraid of media exposure, they would have handled it in a much less obvious manner. These villains are so cardboard and plastic that they have considerably *less* depth than their "B" Western counterparts.

Carol is trying to make a young boy named Danny respond to treatment at the school. Danny is a victim of child abuse, who has lost one hand due to an irate parent. The town officials try to have Danny removed from the school; then, some mysterious individual bombs the school's radio station.

While all of this is happening, some of the film's finer moments occur. Billy confronts an ancient Indian he respectfully calls "Grandfather," and asks if he will show him the way to his inner self. The rites and chants are fascinating, with stunning aerial photographs etching Monument Valley into the viewer's eyes and mind.

The authentic costuming, arts and rites of Indian lore, too long unexplored by film makers, is one of the most worthwhile aspects of the Billy Jack films. The scenes have a natural rhythm and poetic energy that other facets of the film lack.

The school tries to put on a rally that will make the townspeople react more favorably to them. While Billy is being taught, via the visions that he experiences as he attempts to reach his inner source, that "the shadow demon lives inside you. He is all the evil in you that others can see in you, but you cannot," the kids reject the suggestion of violent retribution in answer to Posner's bombing of their station and try peaceful sources, instead.

If violence doesn't win out, neither does their attempt at turning the other cheek.

Returning from the school in their bus, the kids are stopped by some of Posner's men who, again without apparent reason, tip over the bus. Jason leads the pack. Jason is Posner's right-hand man, and he watches the burning bus with a gleam in his eye. When Carol protests, Old Jason does the dastardly deed of punching her in the groin. She falls to the ground, whimpering.

It is a harsh, brutal, senseless act; and this sequence works on that level. Harsh, brutal, senseless acts are a reality. We hardly have any defense for them. Unfortunately, it is the string of events that is difficult to accept.

Carol's savage attack builds the audience's fever pitch anew. It has been lulled during the tranquil moments of Billy's quest for the "Fourth Level," but

Continued on page 64.

BILLY JACK

Continued from page 38.

all that is aside at once.

And then Billy Jack is there!

He appears out of the night, parking his jeep near the scene of the blazing bus and striding nonchalantly toward the group of villains.

"Are the boys out for a little fun and games? Did you just decide: It's Saturday night, so let's roll over a bus or two. Huh?" Billy asks Jason in his inimitable style, casual cool with ironic undercurrents.

"Well, it's something to do," Jason smiles back.

"Yep. Beats going to church, doesn't it?" Billy asks, smiling that disarming smile of his while Jason's men arrange themselves about him.

The build-up to Billy's first fight is well calculated and milked for all it is worth. If the basic thesis of the picture is that love and self-confidence will alter the violent actions of others, the film certainly contradicts itself often enough. Billy never instigates either of the two battles that occur in the film—in fact, up until seconds before each conflict, Billy is constantly seeking a peaceful, non-violent way out of the situations in which he finds himself. Most of his Martial Arts efforts are in self-defense, against impossible odds and vast weaponry; and an act of love will hardly be understood in the few seconds it takes to pull a trigger and splatter his brains out!

The audience is carefully baited to desire the violent retribution. The villain's actions, no matter how mindless, are terrible in their execution.

A huge cowboy confronts Billy, and obviously he isn't going to let Billy walk peacefully away from the area of designated combat.

No way at all!

"Oh, Man! He's a big one, Jas," Billy says, still conversationally.

"Six nine," Jason informs him, smiling the time-worn arrogant smile of movie villains.

"Six nine? Really?" Billy repeats with appropriate awe. "I didn't think you guys piled it that high down here."

The repartee continues. Billy has left his books and socks back at the jeep, and the audience knows the moment of truth has arrived. Billy isn't going to run past this bastard, he's going to cut him down to size.

The cowboy finally leers at Billy and comments, "Indian, you're full of karate crap, you know that?"

"Now, I just knew he was going to say that. And I suppose that means that I will have to say to you that I'll have to show you." Billy turns back to Jason. "And I suppose that's all right with you, isn't it, Jas?"

"Good enough," answers Jas. The sequence might defy reality, but it is beautiful in its classical approach to hero and villain conflicts; and though, by the end, we are supposed to feel that Billy has not accomplished anything by entering into brutal vengeance, he does manage to put a halt to the immediate threats. (Actually, Billy *never* goes after vengeance—his actions are normally an attempt to stop violence perpetrated on vulnerable innocents who face superior odds.)

Billy and Jason carry the routine to the hilt. It is a strange relationship between the two since, for the past two hours, neither Billy nor Jason have come face to face, but the script writers are making up for lost time. "You know, that's one thing about you, you've always had such a generous heart, Jason." The hulking cowboy just stands by, waiting to be cut down like the paralytic marionette that he is.

Billy turns back to the cowboy, and he's such a likable fella. "Well, you can't say I didn't warn you." The cowboy agrees.

The audience is waiting. Waiting.

"He's a valuable man?" Billy asks Jas. Man, they aren't going to drop this

repartee for nothing.

Jas shrugs.

"So-so? That's all you are," Billy says, turning back to the cowboy. Nobody's asked him why he took his boots and socks off back at the jeep, and it is difficult to assume that they are showing proper etiquette, but they still let Billy set things up his own way. Nobody takes a strike at him in the middle of one of his clever lines. "Now I suppose we're down to that time when there's really nothing left to do but show you, is there?"

Right!

Billy moves, leg snapping out and up. Everyone stands watching.

CONTACT!

The big cowboy goes down without further comment, not that he had many to begin with. Several of the other cowboys decide to take the initiative, but Billy quickly takes it out of them with several expertly-aimed kicks.

Somehow, Jason avoids becoming enmeshed in the fight, and Billy and the kids leave the scene for the Freedom School.

For a few moments, there is a lull in the villains' mindless attacks. These characters would be even harder to believe if it weren't for those characters at Watergate who were obviously influenced by the Marx Brothers in their espionage activities.

Elsewhen, Jean attends a seminar on Indian rights, and delivers one of the most effective speeches in the film. Her voice threatens to break with emotion as



A stirring image. Billy's friend, whom he rescued from Posner and his horde of consenting moral zombies, stands up for the rights of the Freedom School during the bloody climax of TRIAL.

she gives a stirring portrait of American history and the corruption of this country's ideals. Delores Taylor may not be the most accomplished actress in the world; in fact, at times, she downright makes you wince in pain, yet she has an impassioned zeal about her performance. The entire *Billy Jack* film is permeated with this sense of concern and honesty, and it is this factor alongside the movie makers' understanding of dramatic conflict and emotional imagery that gives the film its power and hold over an audience.

Carol finally manages to break through the barrier of the young child, Danny, who has had his hand cut off by his parents. Carol endeavors to teach him how to play the guitar with a mechanical apparatus on his arm.

The lull has passed!

Grandfather, the man who has guided Billy on his spiritual journey, is framed for accepting lease money and is removed from the reservation. Shortly thereafter, Jason, with a few of his cronies, corners Blue Elk (Gus Greymountain) and abducts him. They take him, of all places, to the American Legion Hall. These guys know nothing about subtlety, and the actions from this point on make even less sense than the Marx Brothers.

Blue Elk is tortured before the audience at the American Legion Hall. All of this is by the request of Posner. Blue Elk is stripped and humiliated before the dance crowd, and while the scene defies credibility in motivation, once again the emotional imagery is hard to ignore. Certainly, no one is denying that such savage, compassionless acts have taken place in the past. There have been worse. But they would hardly advertise these acts in such blatant manner, at least not where the media might expose such corrupt policies.

Somehow, Billy Jack and Mr. Han—the Hapkido karate master who actually choreographed the fights in *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK* as well as the ones executed in the original film, arrive on the scene. Exactly how Billy and Han knew where Elk was going to be taken is never explained. Jean also has arrived on the scene, ready for action. She runs up to Billy and admonishes, “Damn it, Billy, does somebody else have to be killed before you’ll learn?”

“Look, there is a human being lying down there who also happens to be my friend. Now, you tell me, what do you want me to do, just leave him lie there?”

Jean never has an answer for that, and neither does the film. Billy, throughout this entire scene, tries to talk himself out of a grand battle, even though he is surrounded by armed men; Posner and his men have been waiting for them.

Posner tells Billy that he isn’t going to let him walk away this time, and Billy makes the observation that there are hundreds of witnesses to see what Posner and his men are about to do.

Billy and Han stand upon a balcony, looking down upon Posner and his men

while still others surround them. As Billy delivers his peaceful lines, he calmly takes off his boots and socks once more.

The villains remain as stupid as ever. They let him do it! Now, there has to be some reason why a guy about to get beaten into pulp syrup spends his last few moments taking his shoes and socks off, and there’s a more-than-average chance it has nothing to do with wanting to die with his boots off.

The battle is frenetic, with both Han and Billy giving a superb account of themselves until Posner draws a gun—and kills Han! Billy finally loses his cool and runs straight at Posner, leaping into the air, his foot smashing into the man’s throat. Blood bursts from Posner’s mouth. The eyes gaze upward, sightlessly. In the background, lying in the wreckage of the room, are the remains of Posner’s men, including Jason.

Things continue to get worse. The Governor calls out the National Guard to take position around the Freedom School, until Billy has been arrested for the murder of Posner. Now exactly why they go to the school when none of the violence has occurred there, and when Billy has spent all of five minutes of the two-and-a-half running hours of the film at the place is another mystery.

Actually it’s not so much of a mystery. It’s a perfect set-up, and no one is missing a bet with this film.

Billy gives himself up, but the police try to kill him in the middle of the desert. Though he is wounded, Billy escapes.

Back at the school, the students finally show something less than total unification of opinions; they even argue with Jean about the turn of events, and she is no less a dramatist than the scriptwriters. When they accuse her of not giving them the freedom to make their own decisions, she brings on young Danny who has learned how to play a small Christmas song. Carol accompanies, and there is hardly a dry eye in the place. Only a total cynic could avoid responding.

TRIAL uses sentiment well. It is seldom cloying, but it reaches for the same emotional reaction that it attains with its violence. Violence and sentiment, a new duo that.

The rapidly approaching tragedy is self-evident from the moment the Guard posts itself around the school. Billy is trying to recover from the wounds he received while escaping from the police, and he can no longer be of any help. A young guardsman is seen leaving his home, giving a tender farewell to his wife and young boy; almost immediately afterward, we see Carol looking for Danny.

Violence begins to erupt.

A rock is thrown. A gun is fired. And all hell, as they say, breaks loose.

One of the strange things about *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK* is that even though we know very little about the character’s backgrounds or how they

came to be the way they are, there is such impassioned honesty in their torment that their fates are devastating.

They have made certain that the audience cannot remain passive to their emotional imagery—young Danny being cut down by the National Guardsman, who just said good-bye to his son hours before; or Carol trying to shield him with her body, while the bullets rip into her and blood blossoms with each kicking thud from her flesh. The visual blood-and-thunder is as well-calculated as the buildup to the Martial Arts scenes, right down to the last fountaining of blood that pours out of Jean as she tries, vainly to stop the atrocity.

The connectives to the scene may not make much sense, and therefore, sadly, weaken the Laughlin’s statements; but the impact of the culmination of events is a mural of senselessness and waste and loss.

And in that, they have succeeded.

One hopes their purposes were as honest.

When Jean and Carol are released from the hospital, (they are needed for the third film), they eventually rejoin Billy at the Freedom School, where the students sing a tribute to Jean, much as Carol did for Billy in the beginning of the film. That aside, they break into a strong rendition of John Lennon’s “Give Peace a Chance,” and the music transcends much of what is happening on the screen at the moment. The music is evocative. One almost wants to begin chanting right there in the movie house. Once again, a wise decision on the film makers’ part. The feeling is almost instinctive, like a Cro-Magnon reaction to fire. It fills the theater with repeated pleas, reaching forlornly into the night. “All we are saying, is give peace a chance.”

THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK offers no real verdict. It is a jury at war with itself, knowing what the public demands to make it a multi-million dollar success, yet hopefully guided by the honesty of conviction that pours into their portrayals of these characters.

A third film is already in the planning stages, and it doesn’t take a fortune teller to realize that Carol will probably help guide Billy toward the Fourth ethereal state. Hopefully, the deficiencies of this film will be avoided.

And, also hopefully, they mean more by stating that they have found a way to tap into the social consciousness and public guilt of our times than merely a means to mine it.

We need more than exploitation of the guilt.

The verdict is still out on *THE TRIAL OF BILLY JACK*. They aren’t as quick or pure as they were during the early days of the first *BILLY JACK*. Their motivation is a bit hazy.

But there are intimations of honesty lingering.

And, for the apathetic ’70s . . . perhaps more than enough cause for hope.





THE FIELD OF BATTLE HAS CHANGED, GENTLEMEN. FOR CHANGE IS THE **ALPHA** AND THE **OMEGA** OF ALL BEING!

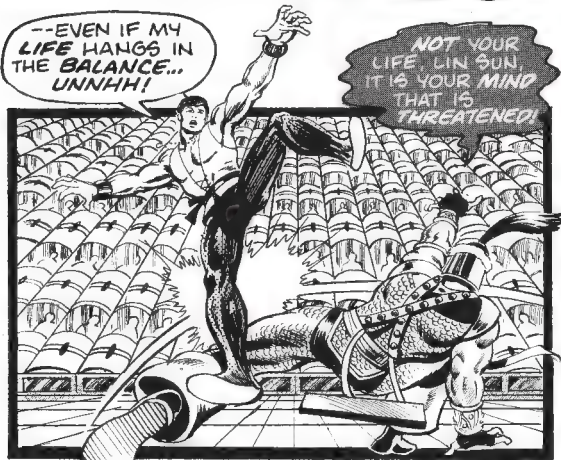
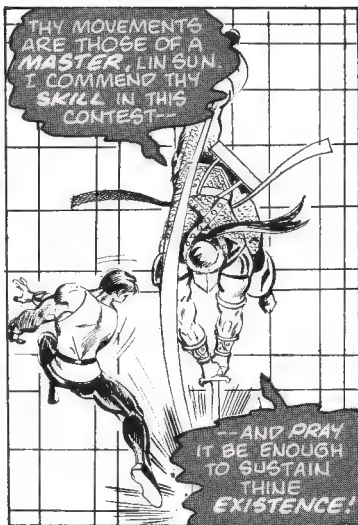
AND IT IS ON THE GRINDSTONE OF TIME THAT YOUR METTLE WILL NOW BE TESTED!

LIN, THESE ARE THE SAME DUDES WE FOUGHT AND BEAT BEFORE!

YES, ABE, MY BROTHER, BUT THIS BATTLE WILL BE TO THE DEATH!

WHICH WON'T BE ALL THAT FAR OFF, GUYS, IF THAT NOT-SO-SILENT FELLOW UP IN THE MEZZANINE HAS ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT!

UTILIZING THE NEWLY-DISCOVERED POWER OF THEIR AMULETS, THE SONS OF THE TIGER HAVE TRAVELLED ASTRALLY TO THE END OF THEIR QUEST... THE LAIR OF THE SILENT ONES... AND THE ACTION BEGINS!



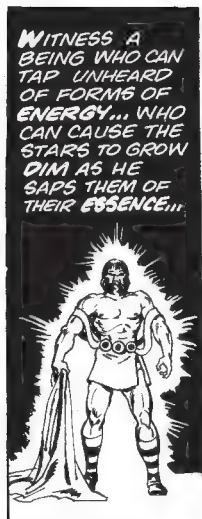


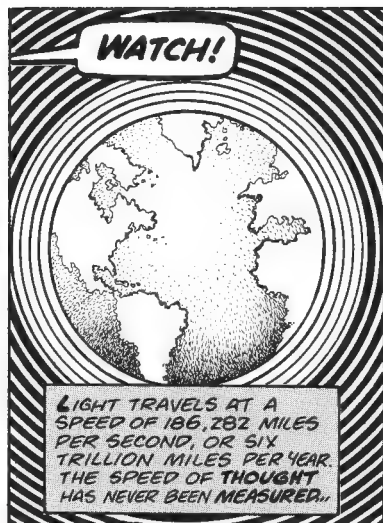


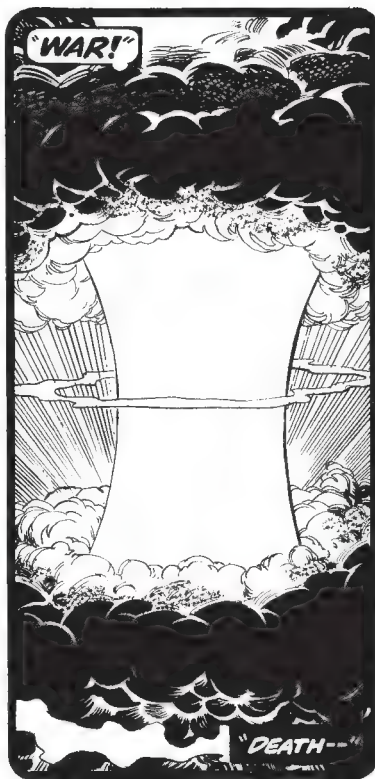


*SEE DEADLY HANDS #1--DON.

*SEE NEARLY EVERY DEADLY HANDS SINCE--REPETITIOUS DON.









"-- AND REBIRTH."

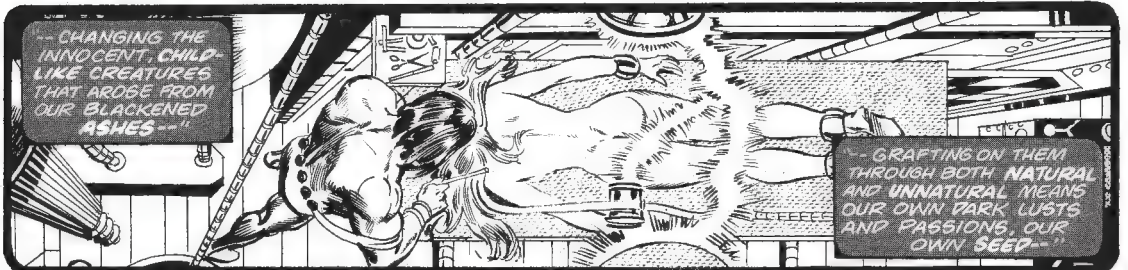


"WE WERE
THERE,
GENTLEMEN,
DWELLERS
IN THE
SHADOWS--"



"-- THE LAST OF THOSE OF THE BEFORE-TIME,
MATING WITH THOSE OF THE NEW-TIME WHEN
WE FACED EXTINCTION, ADAPTING--"

CONQUERING--"



"-- CHANGING THE
INNOCENT, CHILD-
LIKE CREATURES
THAT AROSE FROM
OUR BLACKENED
ASHES--"

"-- GRAFTING ON THEM
THROUGH BOTH NATURAL
AND UNNATURAL MEANS
OUR OWN DARK LUSTS
AND PASSIONS, OUR
OWN SEED--"



"-- TREADING ROUGHSHOD
ON THEIR PRIMORDIAL
SUPERSTITIONS--"

"-- WHEN ON THAT ANCIENT OF
DAYS, A YOUNG SHE OF THEIR
RACE, UNDER OUR CONTROL,
REMOVED A FRUIT FROM
A TREE THE SAVAGES HELD
TO BE SACRED--"



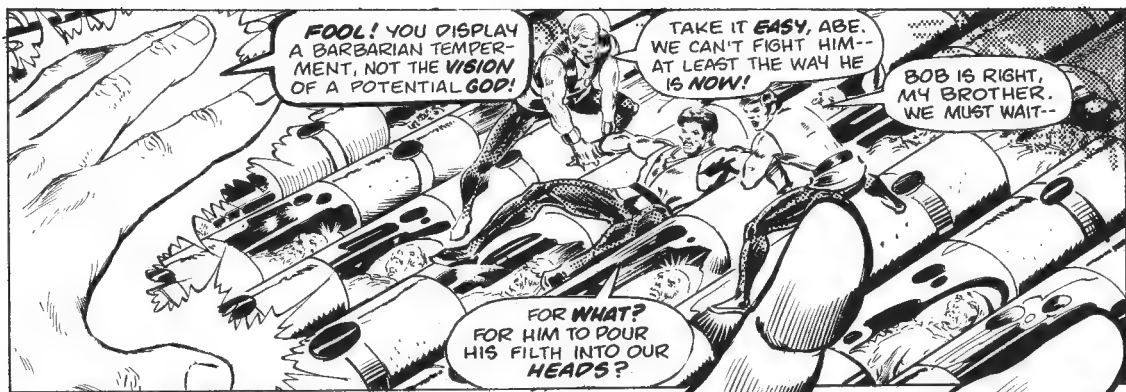
"-- AND WITH THE HEAVENS
THEMSELVES ACTING IN
CONCERT--"



"-- INNOCENCE WAS LOST
FOREVER AND EVIL REAWOKE
IN MEN'S MINDS."

"DESPAIR WAS
LOOSED AGAIN
ON THE FACE OF
THE EARTH!"







YES, GENTLEMEN,
LOOK AT OUR EYES!
SEE THE REFLECTION
WITHIN THEM OF
COUNTLESS MILLENNIA
OF UNBRIDLED EVIL--

-- THE SAME
REFLECTION
THAT WILL SOON
BE MIRRORRED
IN YOUR OWN EYES!



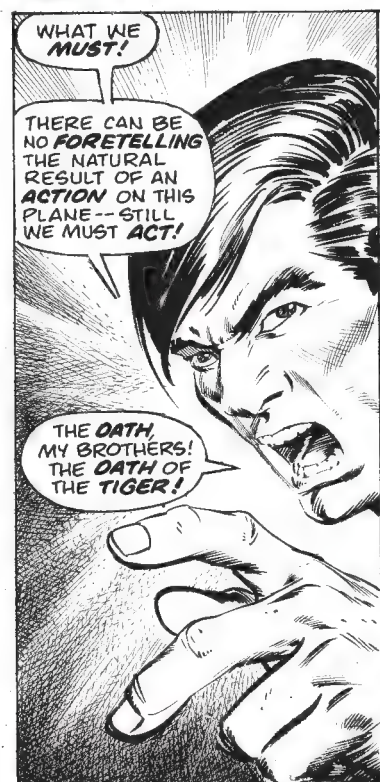
THERE IS NO
SOUND SAVE THE
DRY AND BRITILE
RUSTLING OF
ANCIENT CLOTH
AS THE SPECTERS
OF DARK FANTASY
EMERGE FROM
THEIR GLEAMING
CRYPTS AND
ENCIRCLE THE
SONS OF THE
TIGER

LIN, THIS ISN'T
HAPPENING! IT
CAN'T BE REAL!

IT IS REAL, MY BROTHERS.
SUCH POWER AS IS
PRESENT IN THIS ROOM--

IS ENOUGH
TO ENABLE
THE DEAD
TO WALK!

OUTTASIGHT,
LEADER MAN! NOW
WHAT DO WE DO
ABOUT IT?



WHAT WE
MUST!

THERE CAN BE
NO FORETELLING
THE NATURAL
RESULT OF AN
ACTION ON THIS
PLANE--STILL
WE MUST ACT!

THE OATH,
MY BROTHERS!
THE OATH OF
THE TIGER!



AND THE AIR CRACKLES WITH PULSATING WAVES OF POWER
AS THE THREE YOUNG MEN JOIN HANDS AND RECITE...

"WHEN THREE ARE
CALLED AND STAND
AS ONE..."

"... AS ONE
THEY'LL FIGHT
THEIR WILL
BE DONE..."

"...FOR EACH IS
BORN ANEW THE
TIGER'S SON!

AND AS ENERGY
MAY COALESCE
INTO REALITY
IN THIS REALM--

-- THE POWER THAT WOULD
NORMALLY BE FOCUSED IN
THE SONS OF THE TIGER--

DIFFUSES AND CREATES OUT OF THE
ETHER AN ARMY OF GLADIATORS,
THE GUARDIANS OF THE FIELD OF
LIFE, REAL EMBODIMENTS OF THE
TIGER'S POWER!

AND AN ARMY AT THE
SON'S COMMAND!

WARRIORS!
WE SALUTE
THEE--

--AND STAND READY!
ORDER AND WE OBEY!

ALL PRAISE TO
MASTER KEE IS YOUR
CRY, CENTURION--

--AND YOUR ORDERS ARE...
DEATH TO HIS MURDERERS!
DEATH EVERLASTING TO THE
SILENT ONES!

AYE, THEN
DEATH IT
SHALL
BE!

THE HALL FILLS WITH
CRIES OF THE NON-
LIVING AND THE LONG-
DEAD AS THEY CLOSE
IN COMBAT...

WHOO-EEE! I FELT
THAT ALL THE WAY
DOWN TO MY
LUMBAR
REGIONS!

WOK!

AND CRIES ARE INTER-
SPERSED WITH LONG
PERIODS OF SILENCE,
FROM WHENCE IS HEARD
NO SOUND SAVE THE
CRACKLE OF EXPENDED
ENERGY...

... AND THE STRAINED
BREATHING OF THE
THREE LIVING
WARRIORS...

WHO ARE ALL TOO
AWARE THAT THEIR
IS THE ONLY BREATH
BEING DRAWN IN THIS
BATTLE OF GHOSTS!

PLOW!

TIME STANDS
EERILY STILL.



UNTIL AT LAST GROUND IS GIVEN AS THE MAMMOTH FORM OF THE ONLY LIVING SILENT ONE STAGGERS AND REELS UNDER THE FIERCE ON-SLAUGHT. HE REACTS TO EVERY BRUTAL KICK AND POUNDING BLOW THAT IS DELIVERED TO THE MUMMIFIED VESSELS OF HIS ANCIENT PREDECESSORS! AND HIS ENERGY IS DRAINED...DRAINED WITH EACH BATTERING ATTACK BY THE SONS AND THEIR LEGIONS!



LIN, LOOK! HE'S STAGGERING, ALMOST AS IF IT'S ALL FEEDING BACK TO HIM!

IT IS, BOB!



IF THAT MEANS WHAT I THINK IT MEANS--

ATTACK, MY BROTHERS!

WITNESS: A BACKDROP OF STARS.



A DRAMA OF VENGEANCE.

ATTACK!

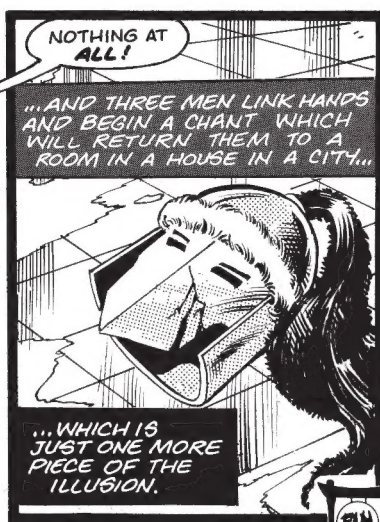
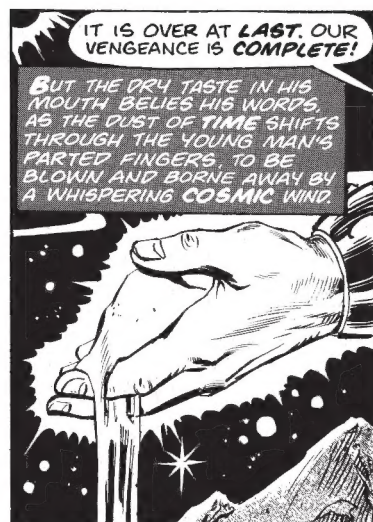
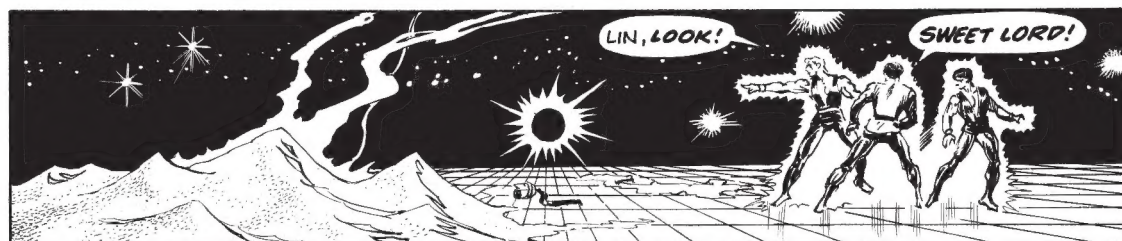
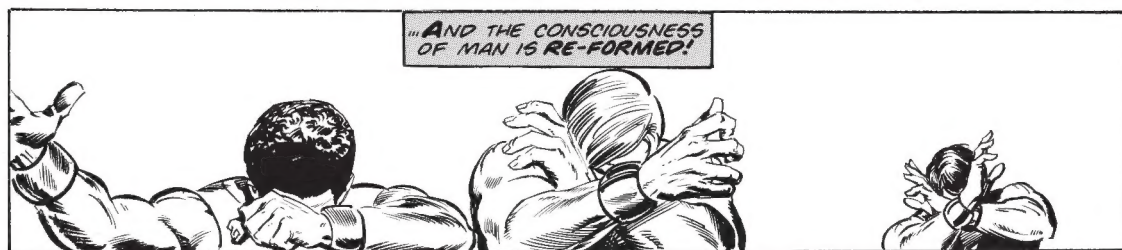


ATTACK!

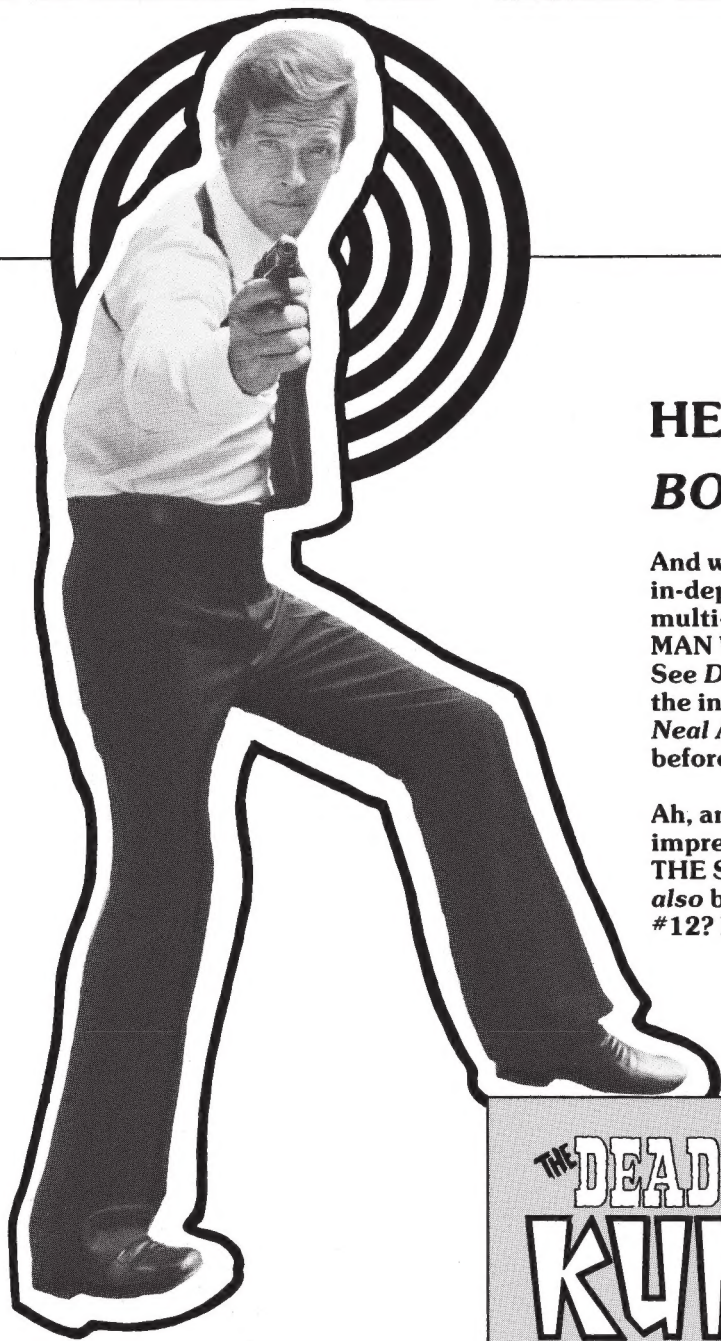
A SCENARIO OF MADNESS -- MAN AND HIS MYTHS...



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NEXT ISSUE:



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